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Contents

Red Ants and Bacon Rind (<i>essay</i>).....	3
By Virginia McCormick	
Nosce Te-ipsium: A Parable (<i>verse</i>).....	7
Barabbas To His Lieutenant (<i>verse</i>).....	8
By Newman I. White	
Therefore Let Us Put Off the Old (<i>verse</i>).....	9
By David Cornel DeJong	
Caravan (<i>verse</i>)	9
By Tom Carriger	
Salute (<i>verse</i>)	10
By David Cornel DeJong	
Della Looks for Youth (<i>story</i>).....	11
By Harry Henderson	
Editorial	15
The Editors	
The Contributors	31
The Editor	
Book Reviews: Edited by J. L. Stewart.....	18
Thomas J. Shaw, Jr., George Harwell, J. L. Stewart, Marshall Pritchett, Lois Smathers.	



“—certain ineradicable marks of kinship between villages”

RED ANTS AND BACON RIND.

—Virginia McCormick.

Red Ants and Bacon Rind

By VIRGINIA McCORMICK

BATTLETOWN earned its title during the civil, or uncivil, war and has jealously guarded it.

High Street has, of course, all the small town shops: the Dry Goods Emporium, the combination dry goods and grocery shops, the rickety green grocery, its shelves adorned with cut-paper hangings held in place by cans and jars of any and all things exciting to the young imagination.

Outside the narrow door, upon the sidewalks of High Street itself the green grocery, with its faded green and red sign, shows to the passing world its realistic announcement of farmers' produce, tomatoes, corn, beans, piled high upon improvised shelves of pine board laid across wooden horses for the long summer season, replacing them with boxes of odd-sized oranges and slowly ripening bananas and slightly wilted cabbage, buried the summer before, when the frost begins to mellow the golden pumpkins, pronounced punkins, and the tricky persimmon.

Any one who has lived in a small town will feel at home in mine; there are certain ineradicable marks of kinship between villages, differing only in degree and locality.

All villagers subsist intellectually, in a measure at least, upon legend. There is the legend of the big snow, the legend of the rainless summer, the

legend of bumper crop year or of the year when both wheat and corn failed: legends of this or that to while away the all too long hours of the short winter days.

Summer days are too busy to need whiling away; they take care of themselves. Quite suddenly, with the flash of a blue wing in a leafless tree, a timeless town becomes conscious of time in the universal scheme and winds its clocks and watches that have been forgotten all winter.

The gardens and small fields adjoining the houses that sit well back from the street, a little disdainful of the neighboring cottages that squat brazenly upon the sidewalks, must be ploughed and planted. Sheds must be painted and fences too; rose bushes pruned and crab apple trees dug around. The big business of spraying apple orchards is no concern of the town—let the farmers worry about that—but all the villagers have at least an apple tree and two or three crab apple and pear trees for the family jellies and sweet pickles. The average small town anywhere will consume more sweet pickles than Boston.

Our cross street is called Church Street because its northern end is buttressed by the Episcopal church, lovely as to architecture and charming the eye with its soft yellow bricks and red tiled roof, its giant cedars and

silver maples and the riot of English ivy and white clematis, trailing over the graves and climbing the mellow pink brick wall.

Diagonally across the street is the court house, a fine example of the Baroque, colonial period, and the new jail, ugly and aggressive, but spotlessly clean. As a jail it has its qualities one assumes, for the windows stand open to the warm spring winds and the criminals hang from the ledges chatting merrily with their friends who pass.

Among our legends there is one of a mob that delivered from the old jail, with much violence, a white man who was accused of a misdemeanour against a negro. The doors were battered down with crowbars and the windows smashed with stones, only to have the jailer poke his head from an upper window with the query: "What in Hell you-all a-doin', wakin' folks up like this? Nothin' aint locked."

Another legend is that of an armed mob of "poor whites" marching upon the town with the avowed intention of hanging a negro and my father, who had defended him successfully against a very serious charge which was afterwards proved a case of mistaken identity.

We were warned early in the evening of a warm summer day that an army of riff-raff was marching from several directions, gathering strength as it came, and the mayor of our town thought it best to put a guard around not only the jail but our house as well. The latter my father refused abso-

lutely to allow, feeling no fear for himself or for his family.

About ten o'clock he very casually went to bed and to sleep and the family was ordered to do likewise. After the house was quiet my brother, who was fourteen and the possessor of a real shot gun, stole softly down stairs intent upon being a hero at all costs. Nothing happened and he too fell asleep a little before midnight but, alas, he dreamed that the mob was at the door and fired straight through the oriel window before he was fully awake.

Mother came dashing barefoot and sleepy-eyed to see what the noise came from, and he was sent disgustedly to bed. Father did not wake at all and next day we learned that when the mob, which had dwindled rather than grown, reached the big hill above the town they had dropped their sticks and staves, fleeing precipitately from imagined terrors of police!

Many are the war-time legends, and one was divided between the delights of the negro stories told at twilight by Mammy Sukey and The Thousand Dollar Nigger and those of the stirring meetings that took place between members of the same families when Sheridan's army arrived, and first cousins came face to face in opposing armies.

There is a legend that my grandfather's house was burned by order of a near cousin, whose older brother had been his room mate at Princeton and who lived across the border in West Virginia. The wonderful ma-

hogany secretary, where Grandfather kept the plantation accounts, and which still bears the marks of his toddy glass, was borne from the flaming building by zealous slaves, losing the brass eagle that adorned the top, and only in the present generation was one discovered in an antique shop to replace it.

There is a legend of the encounter between my aunt and Major McKinley, afterwards President McKinley. It is recounted that she outwitted him, and after the war he was greatly interested in her story of recovering her herd of cows, which had gone the way of cows in a war-swept region—but not all the way, for they never became beef. The real point of the story was that after she had wheedled from the gallant Major a permit to get them *if she could*, she not only did so but came out of the pen of bellowing beasts with an extra and very good milch cow. *Lagnappe*, as they say in New Orleans!

Rose Hill, named for my mother and the horde of rambler roses, Baltimore Belle, Seven Sisters and all the old fashioned sweet-smelling climbers, is a big grey house set upon a high hill, about two city blocks' lengths from the main street of the town. The yard was, and still is, a lovely grove of many and varied trees, and a little brook trickles through the bottom of the grassy lawn. We believed, on the authority of Mammy Sukey, that a demon lived there: red-headed and one-eyed, he carried a lantern invisible to us but enabling him to see us if we strayed that far from the house

after dark. It is with difficulty still that on my yearly visits to the old place, when I cross the little bridge at night, I restrain my feet from breaking into an undignified run. I always look stealthily about me, peering into the shadows of the cypress tree which dips its feathery fingers into the cool waters of the brook, caressing the fragrant mint, tall and erect upon the banks.

There is also a legend about this mint: that one of America's greatest bishops once had a mint julep made of it in combination with fine old brandy and said that it made him know that all the good things of the world were not meant for sinners.

Back of the big, square house was a garden, a calf lot, where the young calves were shut away from their mothers, barns and stables for the fine Kentucky horses, always intended to make the family fortune and ultimately destroying it. There were two hundred acres of arable land, corn and wheat and the fallow fields, heavy with blue grass and throbbing with the new life of young colts, the wisdom of old mares and the ambition of arriving standard-bred Kentucky trotters, in all stages of development, the most aristocratic animals in the world. There are many legends of star colts, slated to become world-wide champions—and some of them did, but not until they had passed into other hands.

The children rode any and all horses that they were allowed to back, and one of my sisters specialized in riding those that were forbidden. Many were the falls but no real disasters,

and except for one brother who was a daring and magnificent rider, the girls outrode the boys, to our great delight.

Perhaps the outstanding legend is that of the red ants and the bacon rind. One day in summer Aunt Ann and Mother were sitting on the long porch, baskets piled high with sewing and stockings to be darned, for we were of the Wordsworthian seven even then and later grew to a family of nine, close upon each other's heels, with all the vigour and enterprise of country children and not even the decorum usual to small town ones. I was in the hammock, my nose in a book, in the cool shadows of the trumpet vine. Mother and Aunt Ann were talking in their low even voices when suddenly my attention was arrested by the words *red ants*.

I would probably have remained oblivious to the subject of conversation but for the reason that a few days earlier Mammy Sukey had told us a red ant legend. She had said that there was no use in Randolph, the butler, sprinkling insect powder around the pantry windows and putting the legs of the big brown oak refrigerator into tomato cans of water with kerosene oil floating in globules on top and red pepper showing in fiery streaks.

"Dar ain't but one cure foh red ants," she had expostulated, shaking her head with its gay bandanna twisted to a witchlike peak and showing a fringe of greying naps all around its edge. We loved Aunt Sukey's hair: it was so neutral and

kind in colour; neither weirdly white like Uncle Tokie's nor menacingly black like Randolph's.

"No, suh, dat ain't nuttin' but time lost a-foolin' wid dese new-fangle idees." Mammy Sukey was always ready with a remedy for all pests: legend held her in its thrall.

Randolph, however, was deaf and sceptical, going about his business quietly and deftly. But his lack of success with scientific methods was recited by Mother, telling Aunt Ann that despite everything recommended by the family druggist and Randolph's own remedy of the tomato cans of oily water the red ants thrived and multiplied.

Noiselessly I slipped from the hammock and through the nursery window, which opened on the long porch, and stole up to Mammy Sukey who was rocking the baby's cradle with one foot and telling a story in a whisper to little Ann, aged two. "Mam' Sukey, what is it that gets rid of red ants?" I whispered.

She shook her head. "Go'long, chile—you ain't got no bizness mes-sin' wid such truck."

I begged so hard and promised so many things, such as not waking the baby to see if he were dead or getting up early in the morning to finish a cherished chapter that had been taken from me the night before, that she yielded to my entreaties and told me in stage whispers that—if you laid a piece of bacon rind in the sun and got as many as three red ants on it, then stole quietly to the side fence of any-

(Continued on page 23)

POETRY

Nosce Te-ipsum: A Medieval Parable

(With apologies to La Fontaine)

By NEWMAN I. WHITE

Hard by Geneva, on a bitter day
 Old Hans was laboring homeward. He was wroth.
The lake was dead, the mountains dull and gray,
 The sky was like a torn and dirty cloth
That tarnished all existence: so they seemed
To Hans Breithofen—thus it was there gleamed

Within his eyes that erst were warm and kind
 A cold ferocious anger; he was tired
Of gathering fagots all day long to bind
 Them into bundles which no man desired
But at a trivial price, by Jewish tricks
Of bargaining. "To Hell with gathering sticks!"

He swore at last, "I'm damned if I go on.
Lisa may starve, or walk the streets and beg;
This life's not worth a groat; I shall not fawn
 Upon it any more, nor lift a leg
Toward market from this spot." Upon the ground
He cast his sticks so hard they came unbound.

"If there's a devil as the priests declare,
 I'll wait for him right here. If Lucifer
Should come this instant I'd not turn a hair
 Nor bandy words with him; I would not stir
For Belzebub himself; I wish he would
Just show his snoot—I'd tell him where he stood!"

No sooner said than on the path uprose
A terrible fellow dressed in sooty black,
So sulphurous of smell that Hans's nose
Crinkled, though to the windward. He'd a sack
Significantly empty on his shoulder.
The air, that had been cold, grew sudden colder.

"Well! Here I am; what can I do?" he thundered
Speak briskly—whaddye want? I'm in a hurry."
Hans could not speak at first, because he wondered
Just why the things he wanted grew so blurry
Within his mind so suddenly. Then he spoke:
"Just help me lift these sticks—the bundle broke."

Barabbas to his Lieutenant on Mount Calvary

By NEWMAN I. WHITE

"Of course," Barabbas said, "they let me go
And kept the Milksop to be crucified.
That's him there, in the middle. He denied
The ancient ritual—said a man might know
God's kingdom in himself, and that a blow
Should never be returned, and that the pride
Of priests was impious. Some one said he tried
To close the Temple. Well, if that be so

He earned his perch. Take me; am I a saint?
By Abraham, I'd rob a caravan
To-morrow; I'm not squeamish, but I'm shocked
That any Jew should blaspheme, and attain
The Temple, priests and Sabbath—such a man
Comes rightly to the cross—God is not mocked!"

Therefore Let Us Put Off The Old

By DAVID CORNEL DEJONG

Is it not well to shake the bough,
To hear the thud of falling fruit,
Than to go on as we are now,
In voice and doing mute?

We have no tinging taste for stars,
And know the granite strangeness of the moon,
Too calmed to flaunt the banners of our scars,
We sit and care not why we dried so soon.

Perhaps it's good that we shake down
This greyly-thin and wizened fruit.
The meager harvest fields are brown
And burning suns are heavy to refute.

And surely, even falls have ends,
And dust must lie where pollen stood,
Likewise the yellow worm descends
To grind the core as seasons would.

Thus we could finish to the core,
The growth, the ripening, the rot,
And even time could do no more,
Than cease with all it once begot.

Caravan

By TOM CARRIGER

It creeps slowly through the night
Across the rivers of sand
Mounds and hills shaped by the winds
Who know no God's commands.
A coyote's cry now dies in the air
Voicing the eternal dark despair
Of the ancient wild.
And the caravan is gone.

Salute

By DAVID CORNEL DEJONG

Not in the bullock tread
Of my brisk desires,
But in the long flight of swans,
The slow tongues of fires,
And the deep clouds
Grazing the silver spires,
I come, where the slow ebb of your eyes
Lifts and retires.

Windward to the throb of wheat
The lithe thoughts incline;
I have spread for you
Six valleys in a line,
And your nimble mind
Shall lay the falcon-wing design,
Whereon my silent skies of hope
Kneel and recline.

I came from the gliding rivers
To gambol in your sun.
Grape-lipped, pigeon swift,
Fleet as narrow waters run,
I come, and full of you
I have dreamed of none.
I come, spent by Babel-thoughts,
Complete, undone.

Della Looks For Youth

By HARRY HENDERSON

THERE are not many habitable places on earth more lonely than a plantation on Saturday afternoons after the tenants have gone to town. The two-roomed cabins crouched under colonies of trees seem to stand faithful guard over the fields while the negroes are away; and the bordering streams and ditches seem to be the limits, as it were, of the world within. On those long-awaited-for Saturday afternoons, when the overseer and planter have gone to their other worlds, the plantation is under only whatever mastery there might be in the love of one man for another and in the physical strength of tired bodies. Yet here many an agreement is made, prompted by mercy and charity; and many a settlement by daring and cruelty.

It was a hot Saturday afternoon in August. Sprawled toes and flat feet had broken the crusted sand between the cotton rows; and at high noon shimmering waves of heat had risen from the fields to meet the clouds. Now that crops had been "laid by" wagons and buggies filled with negroes made their way to churches, the gods of which waited each year till work was over.

The woods around Della's cabin sent the song of its leaves, and birds, and small animals that lived in its undergrowth, to her door. Della was

the wife of Kris Long. She stood outside his cabin, surveying a clothes line which hung from a nail over the kitchen window and lost itself in the graceful foliage of a China tree. There was no doubt that she was troubled, for it was not with her accustomed energy that she set about hanging the hard-scrubbed clothes that had been vile with sweat. Her countenance bore that quizzical expression of anticipatory ardor dulled by misgiving. Tiny beads of sweat trembled beneath her broad flat nostrils; and the swell of her bosom heaved perceptibly under her scanty garment. In her tall, trim, well-turned figure there was no Indian or mixed blood. She was a genuine negro; and for the womanhood of her color, an admirable specimen.

The truth was that she was troubled because Kris had been so good to her; he had always been so good to her; and now she was going to betray him. Yet he was so much older than she, so very much older. And how little romance there had ever been in her life!

Six miles down the dust-glaring county road rumbled a heavy wagon carrying eight negroes to Halifax. Kris was among them. This black, raisin-skinned, bandy-legged negro held an anomalous position in the order of these tenants. He raised the best

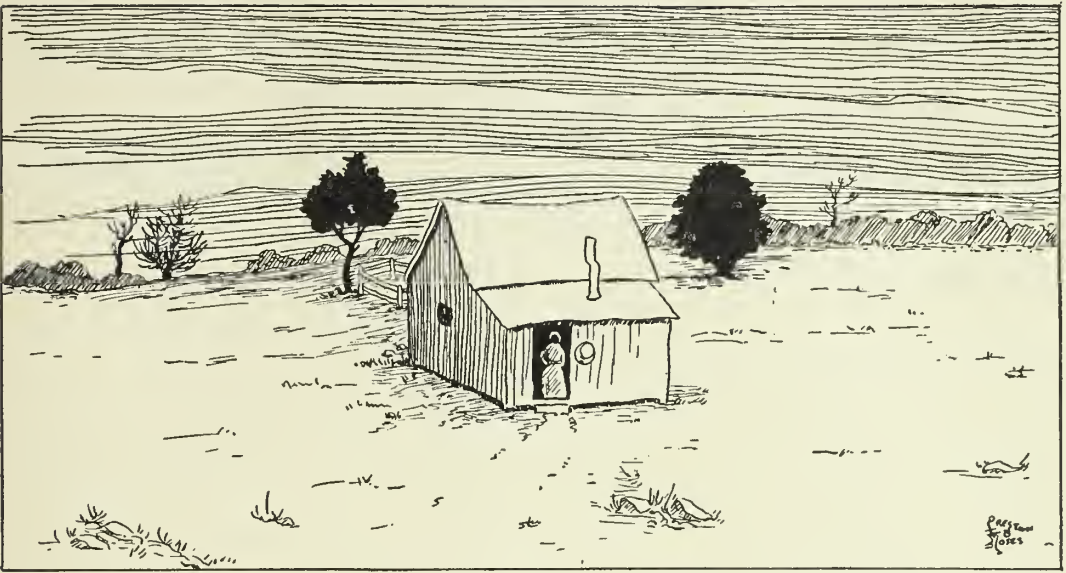
crops of any man on the plantation; and Mr. Tobe had told them a dozen times that Kris knew more about farming and could get by on less than any negro he had ever hired. But in the eyes of the other tenants this superior ability to profit from the soil was not for Kris's advantage. To miss that free, lusty comradeship that was theirs was too great a price to pay for slightly better crops which, in the end, accrued only a few dollars difference. This question of the individual determination of those values which can promise the most ultimate happiness is one that has persisted, that one generation inherits from another. Yet for Kris there had been little question. And for that reason perhaps he was a man to himself. The other negroes might respect him in a way, through a sort of wonder, but they were eager enough to laugh at him behind his back for the hard ways that he imposed upon himself.

Still, there was one other, and that a more vital, cause for his co-laborers to envy Kris. And that was Della. Before Della's Pa died—he had been an itinerant preacher in his later years—he had married her to Kris, who was the steadiest and most serious of the negroes and therefore the most desirable. And for Della's sire life was a matter, not of romance, but of business. But Della was very young then, and it never occurred to her that she might resist her Pa's will. Anyway, why should she have known at so early an age that she was supposed to love the man she married? Particularly among the younger men

had there been ill-concealed regret at the loss of Della. It was a pity indeed that she, everywhere making a voluptuous appeal to young men, should be tied down by marriage to that scrawny, well-on-to-middle-aged negro. It was a lost life.

Kris had by no means remained unaware of this state of things. In his loneliness he had often had vexing suspicions. But what was he to do? It was true that he remembered that he had taken her to wife in as perfunctory a fashion as he would have accepted another field for his labors, thinking that he could handle a little more as well, but he and Della had lived well enough together. She had been industrious and happy in her share of the work; and certainly peace and satisfaction had come to him. At times, though, he had wondered in a vague way if it were possible that he had really missed something in life, if his integrity and good fortune had brought him the same happiness that it would have brought to any other of the men about him. But they should never know that Kris had ever questioned the wisdom of his own manner of living.

The wagon rattled on its way. Three or four of the younger negroes in starched blue shirts, with circles of deeper blue under their arms, were trying to roll cigarettes. It was a hit-and-miss task over those rumbling wheels. The gaunt negro driving presently called the attention of the men to a swollen black cloud that loomed before them and stretched away over the town.



"Hit sho' gwinter bus' fo' we kin git thar," he said.

"Dey always do on dese hot days."

"But 'tain't cloudy behime us," one of the younger negroes spoke.

The men had not progressed a hundred yards down the road before heavy drops of rain began to pound their heads and to spot the dust on the road before them.

"Twon't be long. De drops is too big. Drive on, Ed."

"Yeah, dese summer rains git ober in no time, g'won."

The driver clapped the reins against the sides of the mule, smelling of rain and sweat, and the wagon lunged forward into the August shower. But the rain did not soon slacken, as they had predicted; all the negroes had enjoyed the delectable freshening and cooling of the first few drops, but now it was a matter of getting wet.

"Hit don't seem to be quittin', do hit?" the driver asked.

"Naw, mebbe we bedder drive up yonder to Henry Grove's place 'twell hit slacks up."

"Yeah," added another.

At that moment a jolting model-T Ford car, filled with no less than a dozen dusky faces scurried past like a drenched chicken running for cover. The passing vehicle drew the attention of all the occupants of the wagon.

"De rain hit wouldn't mek no diffunce in dat, would hit, Brer Jake?"

"Naw, suh," the aged Jake answered, "but de Lawd ontends dem fer de nex' generation."

The vehicle for the next generation no sooner reached the bridge in the bottom before one of the tires blew out, and the town-seekers drew up under the shelter of a tree.

By the time the wagon reached shelter in Henry Grove's lot the shower had achieved a good hard rain. Thirsty corn raised wilting leaves to drink, and half-naked pickaninnies

poked their toes in puddles around the house.

Two hours later, back at the plantation, the forces of night lent their aid to the growth of the crops, and the cabins of the tenants began to settle in the luxury of obscurity. Here, it had not rained; so Della stood outside, near the door of her cabin, waiting. She had changed her clothing; now she wore a cherished, close-fitting, brightly-flowered damask that she had bought from "a lady in town." She shouldn't have put the dress on: that she realized now. It was just a stride more if she should decide to turn back. Was it too late already? Had she already lost herself? But Della was one of those persons who know when they have lost and who appreciate the futility of fighting further. Had all the pangs of her conscience beset her she could not have moved from her stand.

It was the hour agreed upon. Three hundred feet from the cabin, hidden by a copse of scrub pine and swamp honey-suckle, Spark Adams slouched up and down the path by the pig pen. For a long while, restlessly, he peered through sprays of pine needles, surveying from one end to another the dimly-lit cabin. Della had said that everything would be arranged. There was no need for his diffidence. Yet, there, in the shadows of the trees he was staid by the misgiving of all lovers. All was quiet here and beyond. Only the underbrush rustled against his body as he passed. Then, with a more determined gait, he approached the cabin and rounded it. There, in

the rectangle of light thrown through the door, stood Della. Yes, she had waited and lost. Long before she could have spoken, she had heard him. Now she knew that his eyes were on her; she felt her breath quicken. Should she run now? Was it?—Yes it was too late. But she must feign some protest.

"Aw, Spark, hit's gwinter rain. We can't go now."

Spark glanced upward, as though he were looking in the heavens for clouds, but he saw none.

"Naw, hit ain't. Hit don't never rain when de sky's lak dat."

"S'posin' hit do? Den whut Ah gwine do?"

"Ah kin tek ker o' yo', honey. Don't you know dat Ah kin tek ker o' yo'?"

The matter of venturing out under the night was settled by a more inscrutable reason, for the leaves of the trees began to quiver with the first drops of rain.

"Da's a diffunt matter," Spark grunted in the deepest guttural tones. "Whut time did he say, honey, dat he gwine come back?"

"Dey wuz late when dey lef', so he sey 'twould be nigh onter twelb o'clock when dey gits heah. Dose mules is sho' slow travelin' at night."

Without any attempt or desire to be jesting he answered, "But, honey, dat ain't too slow fer me."

Spark knew that he could better Kris in a fight; but, like all other tenants, he held in awe the man who led such a strange, laborious life and who

(Continued on page 28)

EDITORIAL

Most college literary magazines sooner or later go the same road. They hold, by virtue of their purpose alone, compromising stands in the collegiate pattern; their subsistence has been due to authorization by publication boards and the more or less perfunctory backing of faculty members rather than to general student interest and participation. It is suggested to members of literary staffs that they make their obeisances for having presumed to maintain standards in literary work and that they start again on the so-called semi-humorous basis. College magazines have been promised readers for all jokes and cartoons and purposely lewd stories that they might publish; and this is the compromise that a considerable number of the college magazines make, with a resulting publication that can stand on not one of its own feet and which finally finds itself in limbo. But whether THE ARCHIVE reaches the greater part of the student readers or not, its purpose still is to publish creditable literary attempts written by students, that being, as the staff sees, its sole *raison d'être*.

Against the type of criticism existing in the university life, the staff of THE ARCHIVE wishes to protest, be-

lieving it wholly unjustifiable; and that is the unsympathetic criticism that all sincere dramatic, literary, and cultural attempts have received in the last three or four years; not that the teachers and students instigating these attempts are afraid of criticism or are in any way trying to shun it. But they do legitimately ask for criticism from those who are capable of criticising, from those who do have some dramatic, literary, and cultural discernment. The limitations upon those persons who are working sincerely for those things are obvious enough; and the burden of discouragement and indifference makes the tasks the more difficult. This is not a veiled plea for high-schoolish praise upon attempts for the reason that they are made by students, but it is a plea for approval upon the honest work that merits approval. A student is the harshest critic that a student has; in fact there seems to be a notion among college students that the first principle of review is a search for flaws.

There has been in the past, at least in the undergraduate school of the university, an apparent absence of any cultural consciousness; there has been a none too eager appreciation of those aspects of college life which can make the individual imprint by which a stu-

dent is known from other men after he has completed his college training. For the greater part of the students, life in college seems to have been reduced to the simple schedule of compulsory classes, broken intermittently by dances, fraternity smokers, and football games. Perhaps that consciousness, which is atmospheric and must be felt rather than seen, will grow with the years.

The changes in policy which the staff anticipates will be made in the hope of bringing the magazine home, of making it a publication of regional study, and of local interpretation. The staff is of the opinion that more distinctive work can be done by students the more closely they restrict the scope of their study. Most young writers feel that in order to be recognized they must be profound, they must write for literature immediately. It apparently never occurs to writers beginning that they can describe best, that they can say best, what they know best. Almost without exception those works in American prose since 1900 which will continue to be read are those by writers who have restricted themselves most narrowly to regional interpretations. In survey of these works, DuBose Heyward's *Porgy* might be mentioned, Julia Peterkin's *Green Thursday*, James Boyd's *Drums*, Roark Bradford's *Old Man Adam an' His Chillun*, and Ellen Glasgow's *Barren Ground*; in New England, the poetry of Robert Frost and Amy Lowell and Edith Wharton's *Ethan Frome*; in the West and Mid-West, the poetry of Carl Sandburg

and Vachel Lindsay, Ruth Suckow's studies of common-place life, and Willa Cather's *O Pioneers* and *My Antonia*. This is by no means an adequate but a very general survey.

The hope of the staff will be to capture, in so far as possible, something of this spirit of local study, believing that in that direction its best efforts lie.

* * * * *

The skeleton outline of O. Henry's life is well known to those citizens of his native state who care about the conservation of local literary values; Greensboro, N. C., Texas, Ohio, New York City are the focal points. To North Carolinians it is not, therefore, a mere repetition of known facts that is the most important aspect of his new biography written twenty-one years after his death. The late Professor C. Alphonso Smith took care of whatever local pride there may have been in the growing national reputation of William Sidney Porter when he wrote what was called the *O. Henry Biography* in 1916. This work of Dr. Smith's was and is a piece of rare excellence produced under rather hampering circumstances, for Dr. Smith was also a native of Greensboro. In his book we have, then, one famous local son sitting in judgment upon and praising another local son. Dr. Smith grew up with and knew as neighbors the same people that formed the background for Will Porter. But there were marked divisions; while young Porter was gathering his experiences as a rolling stone in North Carolina and Texas, Dr. Smith grew up as the

son of a minister and laid the foundations of his reputation as a scholar of English literature.

When you add to these division lines the character of O. Henry, plus the type of things he wrote, the wonder is that Dr. Smith ever overcame his cultured sensibilities sufficiently to admire the apparently hard-boiled virtues of the boy he once knew. But Dr. Smith did produce a biography that was neither mawkishly sentimental, nor scholastically strait-laced. Perhaps it was because he understood and remembered the sensitive and shy small townsman who covered up the scars in his soul by affecting more than a taste for the raw and red life of New York.

In a sense Bob Davis and Arthur Bartlett Maurice take up the threads where Dr. Smith left off. Davis, as a journalistic writer of the older type had opportunities to know the unvarnished O. Henry of the New York days; and Maurice, as an editor of the more elevated sort, had in his way, also, a chance to know the late O. Henry. Reading the *Caliph of Baghdad* we feel that such new material as we have confirms the more veiled reticence of Dr. Smith. This is especially true concerning the period of O. Henry's imprisonment in Columbus, Ohio, and of his final years of freedom in New York. It is true that a part of this story has already been filled in by Al Jennings, just as in the same way Mrs. Maltby has told the story of the romantic period with Athol in Texas. But the Davis-Maurice biography, while it supplements Dr. Smith's work

does not succeed it. The authors of this new volume have tried unsuccessfully to hide the loose and journalistic form of their book by weaving through it the pattern of Haroun al Raschid, but the new factual substance that they have to offer does not sufficiently warrant a book of such rambling length.

The main defect is to be found in their comparative omission of the critical sense. If O. Henry has been dead long enough to warrant a new biography, he has certainly been dead long enough to call for a revision in critical estimate. That such a revision would probably place him lower in the scale of national values than he had in 1916 when Dr. Smith wrote of him is apparent well enough, but even Dr. Smith under the astigmatism caused by local vanity was more careful than Davis and Maurice to measure his man by established standards of literature in the realm of the short-story. Dr. Smith did bring into consideration Poe and de Maupassant. But the present authors do not go as far along the line as did their distinguished predecessor.

Of all the themes that O. Henry dealt with: South America, the changing old South of the United States, Texas, and New York, the last named has, perhaps, changed more than any other. New York, 1931 is not New York, 1901. Even the shop girls are different now, not to mention streets, buildings, places, boarding houses and saloons. The old New York of O. Henry is swept away, or fast going.

(Continued on page 27)

BOOK REVIEWS

Tempered Fires

Fatal Interview. By Edna St. Vincent Millay.
New York and London: Harper and Brothers.
52 pp. \$2.00.

For some of the more ecstatic if less reasoning admirers of Miss Millay this book of sonnets will be strange fare. By limiting herself to the strictness of the sonnet form Miss Millay has in *Fatal Interview* established for herself limitations in technique which curb exploitation of the previously accepted Millay manner. In this book there is little of the old "candle at both ends" philosophy, and there is less of the lyric cry of youthful delight in youth. Rashness and enthusiasm are not predominant; only echoes remain, though the old themes of love and death are here, with a difference. The key to this difference is, perhaps, to be found in the dedication of the volume; "To Elinor Wylie"—

*When I think of you
I die too.
In my throat, bereft,
Like yours, of air,
No sound is left,
Nothing is there
To make a word of grief.*

The brooding spirit of the author of *Angels and Earthly Creatures* lives again in Miss Millay's book. Even the metaphysical turn which Miss Wylie brought over into her work from John Donne has place in *Fatal Interview*. Through a vein of friendship Miss Millay turns toward the obscure and the complex in life.

Avoiding the mere intellectual abstractions of a John Donne, but never quite attaining the more successfully intellectual and emo-

tional creative genius of an Elinor Wylie, Miss Millay seems not to be quite at home in her new rôle as a poet of the deeper soul. Out of the fifty-two sonnets in the book only three or four strike and hold the attention of the reader. One of the best is number XXX, "Love is not all; it is not meat nor drink." Another is number XIX,

*My most distinguished guest and learned friend,
The pallid hare that runs before the day
Having brought your earnest counsels to an end
Now have I somewhat of my own to say:
That it is folly to be sunk in love,
And madness plain to make the matter known,
These are no mysteries you are verger of;
Everyman's wisdoms these are, and my own,
If I have flung my heart unto a hound
I have done ill, it is a certain thing;
Yet breathe I freer, walk I the more sound
On my sick bones for this brave reasoning?
Soon must I say, "'Tis prowling Death I hear!"
Yet come no better off, for my quick ear.*

Yet all of the sonnets in *Fatal Interview* evidence an improved grasp of form and whatever they may lack in emotional intensity is more than counterbalanced by a spiritual refinement.

The general tone of the volume reflects in an admirable way what has been happening to poetry in America during the past five or six years. The spirit of adventurous personal expression in which poets wrote between 1912 and 1924 stamps that epoch as a period in which poets sang with a feeling of new discovery and liberation marred only by the fact that they were sometimes out of tune. Their world is older now, what with the war, prosperity, and depression, and they as poets have turned back to the more serious business of singing and thinking in ac-

cordance with the rules of the past. *Fatal Interview* thus marks a definite stage in Miss Millay's progress.

Her first book, *Renascence*, with its significant title poem, was published in 1917. During the subsequent interval of ten years her work was of much the same type; a romantic love of beauty in life foreshadowed by a cynical and an impatient apprehension of its brevity. In the *King's Henchman* (1927) beauty all but subdued any conflict that might have belonged to life; but with the publication of the *Buck in the Snow* three years ago there came a turning point in which the battle between reason and beauty assumed its significant place. And *Fatal Interview* carries on the change. Books of verse are not now as numerous as they were during the Untermeyer anthology days. But, if there are not as many poets, there are, perhaps, better poets, poets more careful of the qualities of their wares. As such a poet an older and a wiser Miss Millay deserves even more consideration than she had ten or fifteen years ago.

THOMAS J. SHAW, JR.

In the Manner of Conrad

S. S. San Pedro. By James Gould Cozzens. New York: Harcourt, Brace. 1931. 118 pp. \$1.50.

James Gould Cozzens' *S. S. San Pedro*, which appeared in *Scribner's* mid-summer number of 1930 as the first selection in its \$5000 short-novel contest, now comes to us in book form. The purpose of the contest, as then stated by *Scribner's*, was to open "a new field for a neglected form of fiction"; namely, the short novel, a literary form in which, I believe, the Germans have thus far excelled and been especially prolific.

Cozzens, who wrote *S. S. San Pedro* at the comparatively early age of twenty-six, made his literary debut at sixteen, and saw his first book, *Confusion*, in print while still a sophomore at Harvard. In spite of his

youth however, his work, as exemplified in *S. S. San Pedro*, has considerable strength and a fair degree of polish. His style, however, though smooth and "effectively modern," still lacks the finesse and beauty that come only with experience and complete maturity. Frequently in his story we find a trace of ambiguity or a situation that has not been handled with quite the thoroughness of a master—defects too slight to impair seriously the general excellence of the story and yet sufficient to remind us that Mr. Cozzens is still on his way up.

S. S. San Pedro is a tale of the sea and, although of more than twenty thousand words, gives the effect and impression of a short story. The action covers only a short period of time and takes place in one locale, the ship. In flavor the story, like most sea-stories, calls to mind the works of that supreme master of sea-fiction, Conrad. I think, however, that Mr. Cozzens' story contains something more than a mere reminder of Conrad. There is a positive similarity, and, I believe, an actual influence. More than once we are able to detect resemblances to specific works of the eminent Pole. For example, the peculiar psychological impression that Doctor Percival makes on several characters, and Cozzens' subtle suggestions throughout that the tragedy ahead, which we sense from the start, is due to the doctor, even though he be hundreds of miles away, calls to mind the uncanny influence of the nigger over the crew in *The Nigger of the Narcissus* and the inexplicable impression there that the fate of the ship is somehow effected by the nigger.

Cozzens however does not imitate Conrad. He is a writer in his own right and strong enough to stand alone. Whatever influence or similarity we find takes its form in emulation rather than imitation, for, it seems to me, Cozzens succeeds in obtaining strength and effect without resorting to nerve-strain-

ing repetition, a literary crime of which Conrad was frequently guilty.

S. S. *San Pedro* has no complicated plot. It is a well-told, interesting tale of a great ship and her crew battling vainly against the sea, merciless and irresistible. Cozzens gives us several interesting characters: Bradell, the austere senior second officer; Captain Clendening, who somehow reminds us of the immortal Ahab; Miro, with his mad passion for *tela*; Doctor Percival, whose gaunt, sinister figure overshadows the ship; Marilee, who wanted to live; Mr. MacGillivray, whose gods were turbines; and Quail, who sang the "St. Louis Blues" as the ship went down. And there are two unforgettable descriptions, scenes painted beautifully and indelibly: dawn rising, dripping and fresh, from out of the eastern ocean and spreading her long first rays over the sleeping nation; and the final scene of the *San Pedro* slowly, quietly, with only a shudder, slipping beneath the rolling waters.

GEORGE HARWELL.

A Southern Gentleman

Light-Horse Harry Lee. By Thomas Boyd. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1931. 344 pp. \$3.50.

With the great number of biographies which have constantly appeared on Washington, Jefferson, and some other statesmen of their period who are the best known today, Thomas Boyd's *Light-Horse Harry Lee*, with its careful study of one of the less famous men of the time has definite importance. After reading the book, one feels with some concern that posterity has been unjust to at least one important American personality, for Major Henry Lee's life cannot be fitted into any type, but throughout shows the struggle of a definite individuality.

Mr. Boyd, in the early part of his work, is too anxious to get his subject launched on his career, and thus makes the details of Lee's youth too hurried to be of real interest.

The book takes on dignity as it progresses, however, for from the time of the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, the reader will become more and more sympathetic with Lee's life, and towards the close of his career, will, I believe, have a vital interest in the sturdy Southerner. The striking injustices done to Lee in his last years cannot but arouse the emotion of all readers, no matter how detached an air they may have cultivated in their reading. Though the author does by no means grow hysterical in style, I found the description of the Baltimore atrocity approaching the hectic.

Light-Horse Harry Lee lies with a vast number of books between the important and the common-place. It is important in that it sustains the interest of the reader in a subject that is worth while. It tends towards the common-place in that the book has little in it which is an addition to the now highly developed field of biography.

J. L. STEWART.

Demi-God

John Henry. By Roark Bradford. New York: Harper & Brothers. \$2.50.

Here is a book that will appeal to those persons who still have left something of the spirit of hero worship. From the beginning of time men have worshipped mystic personalities representing those traits and powers seemingly most desirable in themselves. Supernatural beings have stamped the pages of history, have held the fate of empires in their invisible hands. Then there have been men among men who have been half immortalized for some distinctive quality or power and have passed on leaving their reputation to be distorted or blazed into a mythical standard held almost unattainable by generations to follow, yet ever striven for. George Washington was one such character. Lief Erickson, King Arthur, others. John Henry, whoever he may have been, was certainly

not all that the American negroes of the Mississippi region believe he was, but Roark Bradford has so authentically painted a living image of the black demi-god that one might even find oneself anticipating the possibility of meeting John Henry on the next block.

The Guild must be congratulated upon their choice of *John Henry*, especially after the successful attempts of South Carolina writers to usurp the attention of Literary America and focus it on Gullah products. *John Henry* presents a subtle philosophy almost hidden in the excellent workmanship of the author, who not once sacrifices loyalty to the subject to present his own personality.

It is so entirely John Henry's book that the reader forgets printed matter and is led through the Mississippi region by old John Henry "frum de black river contry where de sun don' never shine."

The book is an authentic example of the rhythm that is the negro race. Even the prose is in tune with the bits of song scattered throughout the pages, and when the characters speak, the reader is held by the illusion of musical drama. The book is divided into individual stories of John Henry's adventures, but only in its entirety is the illusion complete.

The reading public owes it to the spirit of John Henry to accept him as one of the few semi-mortal individuals who have influenced the standard of true manhood among races.

MARSHALL PRITCHETT.

A Human Chinaman

The Good Earth. By Pearl Buck. New York: John Day Co. Inc. 1931. 379 pp. \$2.50.

For the writing of *The Good Earth*, Pearl Buck has had first-hand information. After her American education, received at Randolph-Macon college, and Cornell university, she has spent her life in China, where she

has gleaned a sympathetic understanding of the Chinese peasant.

The Good Earth has, for its plot, the life of one Wang Lung, which can be easily divided into three periods. The first of these deals with the life of Wang from the time of his marriage until the famine. In the second section, he recovers from the poverty caused by the disaster and returns to prosperity. In the third part, he acquires a mistress. In the telling of the story, the swiftness of style employed by the author reaches its peak in the description of the famine. The tendency to lag in the closing chapters is not completely avoided.

Wang Lung is a remarkable character. Mrs. Buck has painted him as having an insatiable desire for land; a desire which can be traced to a determination to "show" the people at the "big house" where he bought his wife. This desire is gratified only when he succeeds in buying the "big house" itself. Especially striking is his rapid change in character after his intimacy with the prostitute.

In contrast to the individuality of Wang Lung, the wife and prostitute are presented as types of Chinese women. The former is an all enduring, simple creature who knows nothing but to work and bear children. The latter is a frivolous, vain, shallow minded, and crafty person, whose gradual dominance over her conquest brings the narrative to its conclusion. In these three character studies, and in her brilliant descriptions, Pearl Buck has excelled.

LOIS SMATHERS.

"The Damndest Book You Ever Read"

Thirteen Men. By Tiffany Thayer. New York: Grosset and Dunlap by arrangement with Claude Kendall. 1931. 346 pp. \$2.50.

With the thirteenth printing of Tiffany Thayer's *Thirteen Men* just one year after

its first publication, it is well to examine the book in a critical manner to see what the public likes to read and why it does so. The reason for the success of this book is rather obvious. Overlooking, for the moment, the aims of Mr. Thayer, whether decent or cheap, the result of his labors is a series of sensuous scenes written in a very racy manner. Hence, thousands of people have bought the book, some because they consider it a "dirty" book, and they enjoy "dirty" books; some because they consider it a work of art, and no puritan is going to dictate to them what to read on the basis of morality; and some, we fear, for the spicy illustrations which they have discovered while glancing over the edition.

As the reviewer's duty, we have first to decide what the author's aims have been in the writing of his work. Our first conclusion, then, is that the slim plot of the book is entirely superficial. The author has placed little importance in it, nor has he worked out the many murders of the "tall fellow" either logically or interestingly. The fact that, in a very limited time, one man could kill around forty men, women, and children without capture is impossible. The other fact that the man killed these people with no motive whatsoever is highly improbable. We must, then, conclude that Mr. Thayer has had as his main purpose, the character study of twelve "respectable" men, who are called together as a jury to determine the "tall fellow's" guilt. In these character studies, the author uses a cultivated impersonal style, hinting throughout the pages, that these men are types. Here we find the author at his best. That the twelve jurors, in their sordidness, their cheapness, and in their complacency are types, none can honestly deny. But in the presenting of these types, Mr. Thayer has done nothing new.

Thirteen Men, however, does not consist solely of this character study. Throughout the book, the author has inserted hints at what is obviously his pet theory, that of fatalism. We have no quarrel whatsoever, with this theory. It has been expounded by our greatest writers for centuries. But in the fact that Mr. Thayer is reticent to develop openly this philosophy, we are forced to say that he is lacking in the now hackneyed term, intellectual honesty. It can be easily noticed that every mention the author makes to the vastness, and the inescapableness from the ironic situations of this life, he endeavors to cover it up with some cute expression. A sentence on page 160 of the thirteenth edition shows this tendency at its worst. "If you don't think you are part of a vast pattern that is being woven by omnipotent hands, consider the next pickle you eat." The doctrine is there, but it is smugly hidden by an attempt at coyness.

Whatever ability Mr. Thayer may have as an honest artist, *Thirteen Men* had been written, first and foremost to create a wide sale.

J. L. STEWART.

A Dog's Life

Runt. By Jo Anderson. Chattanooga: Pound Publishing Co. 42 pp. \$1.00.

The original poem now printed under the title of *Runt* has long been a favorite in livery-stables and corner drug stores. None of its humor has been lost in the publication. As for the rest of the book, we feel unable to give any criticism after such glowing endorsements as "It's a Masterpiece," by M. C. D., "He's some dog" by D. E. H., and the anonymous statement, "It certainly is a dandy piece of writing and everyone here who read it is crazy about it."

Red Ants and Bacon Rind

body's home and flung it over in the grass, letting it rise high in the air and fall upon the lawn, the red ants would leave the house from which these had gone and follow them.

That seemed easy, all except finding a victim for the red ant pest, for at that stage of my development I had a highly exaggerated idea of my duty to my neighbor.

The first thing to do was to beg a bacon rind from Aunt Mel, the cook, tall and bony like an Indian but with a heart of gold towards all children. She was in her most melting mood, so I soon had that much of the ammunition requisite for war on red ants. The next move was to choose my confederates. Peggy was my first choice, being nearest me in age and of a yielding disposition, and where Peggy went there went Hugo, so he needs must be the third of the trio, for it seemed to me too serious an undertaking to be managed by two.

I crept to the side of the porch and whistled our own special call, a raucous combination of catbird and cardinal notes, very irritating to the birds themselves, who frequently cried their disapproval over our heads. Their ears immediately pricked up, and we were in secret conference in less time than it takes to tell it.

The question before us was, who should we victimize? Peggy was in favour of one of our poorer neighbors whose cotton-headed tribe waged continual warfare upon us with rot-

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ten apples, stones or any available missiles. Hugo begged for the Methodist minister to whose home we could take a short cut across the orchard and avoid the brook and its demon after dark.

That I was sure would never do; if it were found out, it would be attributed to our Episcopalian background and start an intensity of feeling that I was old enough to know would mean trouble. It gave me an idea, however. Why not send the red ant pest to our own minister? He seemed always especially happy when reading about the plagues and afflictions that beset the Bible characters.

The proposal met with instant adoption. The rectory was an ugly, unpicturesque house behind the church, with a high set of front steps, a porch which had no railing and a yard that never had any flowers in it. There were no ministerial children, and the rector's wife had thin straight lips that never encouraged us to intimacy. I know now that it was her great cross that she had no children and she desired above all things to have children love her but was shy and ill at ease with them.

The minister was different; life seemed all beatitudes for him, and that was why he could not pull a long face even for the plagues of Egypt. We had a moment's qualm over afflicting him with red ants, but were soon reassured by the memory of his kindly countenance. Yes, the rectory was by all odds the best place for red ants and it was far enough away to present a real difficulty should the

transferred ones be seized with nostalgia.

Mammy Sukey had impressed upon us the knowledge that to be effective the feat must be accomplished after dark, and herein lay the unspoken fear which beset the three of us: to reach the rectory, we had to cross the bridge over the brook! It was easy enough to run away from home just after supper when Mother was putting the baby to bed and Father reading the *Alexandria Gazette*, but it took all the courage we could muster to beard the demon.

However, we caught the three red ants on the bacon, and then three more in case something happened to these, and put them in a bottle. All went well, as they say in the story books, and after supper we crept quietly past the demon's lair. But we heard him chuckle as we left the bridge, which warned us that he slept not, neither was he in ignorance of our passing.

Up the main street of the village we went, as if it were our regular habit to wander abroad after dark, answering with all decorum possible the chaffing of the Jew merchant and the green grocer as we passed their still open stores.

We skirted the church and the graveyard, arriving unseen at the side of the rectory, with its tall paling fence. Here, in the shadow of a big oak tree, the ants were shaken from the bottle and three of them placed upon the bacon rind. Next the rind was thrown high in the air by Hugo, who, by right of being born male,

threw in a straighter line than either Peggy or I, despite the fact that he was younger and shorter of arm.

The deed was done! We turned and fled, leaping the bridge over the demon's lair with a shout of triumph.

No one asked any questions and for four days we waited. Then we heard Randolph tell Mother that the red ants were all gone. We smiled knowingly at each other. Randolph was not in the secret; he was a doubter. Only Mammy Sukey believed that *we* had done it.

On Friday morning at breakfast, Mother told Father that the minister and Mrs. Martin were coming to supper that night. We could hardly breathe, we were so tense with excitement. Six days ago we had thrown three apparently innocent red ants into their yard and Randolph no longer even went through the form of dusting the window sills with an evil-smelling powder or putting water and red pepper into the tomato cans which still held the feet of the refrigerator, like particularly shabby dressing-slippers on a squat brown idol. We wondered, and I think we feared a little, what the evening would bring forth, for the older children always came to the table unless there were really formal gatherings.

When the remains of the broiled chicken and fried tomatoes had been cleared away and the big ham removed from in front of Father to the side table because the minister said he just could not eat even a sliver as thin as paper, much less another beaten

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biscuit or crisp golden waffle, Randolph put in front of Mother the two rabbit moulds of blanc mange, one of chocolate, rich and brown, and the other creamy white with chopped almonds showing through, both surrounded by a quivering sea of wine jelly. Then he brought the little round sponge cakes, with a coating of powdered sugar, that we had hungrily watched Auntie Mel making and we no longer concerned ourselves with the memory of red ants and bacon rind but surrendered to a season of pure enjoyment.

However, it was short-lived, for just as I raised my first spoonful of chocolate blanc mange and wine jelly, after an agony of indecision between the white and the brown lusciousness before me, and it was half way to my mouth, Mrs. Martin, with her thin lips which always seemed to express surprise, asked Mother if she had been bothered with red ants.

Mrs. Martin, it transpired, had just acquired red ants; indeed, they had first been noticed last Sunday. We looked at each other surreptitiously, growing white about the gills and suffering an immediate loss of appetite. Mother looked at us and seeing that our eyes were probably bigger than our appetites, told us that we might be excused and go out on the lawn. We escaped gratefully, not even asking to

be allowed to take the sponge cakes with us nor answering Randolph's whispered accusations of eating something forbidden before supper.

We huddled miserably on the front porch steps, awaiting the hour of judgment, for it never occurred to us that we would not be called into Mother's room and faced with the consequences of our guilt.

The evening passed and nothing happened. When nine o'clock struck and Mammy Sukey called us, we heard Mother telling Mrs. Martin what Randolph had done to get rid of red ants.

Once safe in the nursery we began to regret the blanc mange and wine jelly. Mammy Sukey felt so sorry for us that she filched three sponge cakes from under the very eyes of Randolph, and we ate them in bed, with consequent discomfort from crumbs and sugar, but we were happy in our wickedness and triumphant in our escape from justice.

The years have brought me something that for lack of a better word we call wisdom, but I was a woman grown before I awoke to a belief that those three red ants on a strip of bacon rind had not blazed a trail for hordes of them from our pantry to the rector's refrigerator, and sometimes even now I wonder if it is not worth trying!

Editorial

And it was of the old New York of the 1900's that O. Henry wrote the most of his sling-shot like stories. Thus, ironic time has brought O. Henry, most journalistic and unliterary of writers, to the place where his work has to be considered, if it is to be considered at all, in a literary and a historical connection. O. Henry of all people would snort derisively at being reduced to the common denominator of a literary craftsman or an artist. But that is the question he comes to—and most of us will rest content to call him what he was—a very clever craftsman. He has his place, and some day in the dim future perhaps some super-pent-house dweller in New York will read him to see how his great-grandmother and grandfather lived and loved and died twenty years before the Volstead Act became a law.

And even though the *Caliph of Bagdad* makes slight pretensions to being a well constructed critical biography of O. Henry, the writer, it does give us intimate pictures of Will Porter, the man.



A COLLEGIAN AND HIS
MONEY SOON PART—
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Della Looks For Youth

possessed the marked favor of the overseer.

Finally, with an ingratiating smile, he caught Della's arm. "But, mebbe we kin tek a drink or two ob dis." Reaching into his pocket, he drew out a sixteen ounce, ribbed-glass flask. This Spark had won at the last county fair. He unscrewed the top and applied the rank stench to his nostrils.

"Honey, Ah paid a dolluh fer dis down at Croke fillin' station. Ah could a got hit from Pete, but his ma said that he had went ter town. Hit sho' oughter be good stuff."

"Yeah, hit ought," answered Della in the tone of one who has started and for whom there is no turning back. "Hit sho' ought," she repeated slowly.

It was not comforting to Spark—that distant, flat response of hers. Obviously he was disconcerted. "Wal, we kin tek a drink ob dis, anyhow," he repeated. "Mebbe de rain will be ober den, den we kin go out."

The two people turned and entered the cabin together, shutting the door on the rain and the night.

Inside, Della lowered the light in the oil lamp. Spark stood awkwardly at the door, contemplating the room, then he raised the flask to his lips and in two long gurgling pulls emptied the bottle of half the whisky. With a violent motion he shook his head, as though to secure the passage of the liquor to his belly. Turning in a deliberate manner to the woman standing beside him, he proffered the flask. Della took it with some hesitancy,

then as if delay would complicate the state of things, she turned the bottle to her mouth, swallowed and coughed. Her eyes, though, were on Spark as she thrust the flask from herself.

Spark settled into that warm and tingling lethargy that the intoxication brought. All thoughts and all cares beyond the moment were now extraneous to his concern.

An hour came and passed; and during that hour the rain on the earth and the forces that be in human life pursued their courses. For all but the unseeing were things no longer the same. Only the still black of night had not changed its color, and, for some time more, would not. And the walls of the cabin of Kris Long would have one more burden to carry with them to decay.

Long, sultry minutes passed. Then the black window framed a startling flash of lightning—a dash of fire which splits the heavens and lets the angels peer on earth. An awful quaking and rumbling of thunder followed; window panes shook; and branches of the trees danced in a hilarious wind. Then, silence; the silence of the moment after death. Della straightened to the wall and stared out into the darkness. She had awaked to the consciousness of what, for a while, she had tried to forget. Suddenly the one thought invaded her consciousness; she sobered completely. That awful lightning, that thunder, that, that, was God. Oh, God had seen her! He had been watching! It was his revenge; it was the wrath of God! Oh, what had she done? What

had she done? How could she have forgotten poor Kris? She had forgotten just for a while, just for a little while. And Kris, poor Kris! He had always been so good to her; how could she have forgotten him? It was all so terrible, so terrible. Now she had betrayed him and sinned. How she had sinned! Oh, God! And that damned old Spark had made her sin—that mean, deceitful nigger.

Della suddenly turned upon Spark; in fact, her attack was so sudden that, for a minute, he quavered, not grasping what had happened. Then, as the flood of realization sobered him, he understood.

“Git out o’ heah,” Della screamed. “Oh, Lawdy, oh, Gawd! Git out o’ heah, I sey. I’m gwine kill yuh. I swar I’m gwine kill yuh.”

Spark backed up to the wall and waved his arms to quiet her. “Aw wait, honey. Aw wait. I swar I ain’t done wrong by yuh. Gimme time.”

“Ah’ll gie yuh nothing. Git out o’ heah. I swar Kris’ll kill yuh.”

“But wait a minute, honey. Hit ain’t right. Hit ain’t right fer yuh ter stay wid dat ole fool. I’s gwine tek you wid me. We gwine leab dis place. I’s gwine mah’y yuh. I’s gwine tek yuh away ternight.” All the while he was talking Spark was backing to the door. “You’s too young ter lib wid dat ole nigger. You ain’t as ole as I is. You’s too young. It jist ain’t right, I swar it ain’t. I’m gwine do right by yuh. We kin leab ternight. Ah kin git a job wukin’ in tobacco down ’tother side er Rocky

Mount. We kin leab now. I done got a mule an’ a buggy.”

“You’s lyin’, Spark. You’s lyin’. You ain’t wuth the patches in yer britches.” Della spoke this, but in a much calmer tone. She had been greatly quieted; she was thinking.

“I ain’t lyin’. Hit’s de Gawd’s truf. Ah’ll mah’y yuh termorrow. Go wid me now and git away from dat ole nigger. Hit ain’t right fer yur ter stay.”

“Hit ain’t right fer me ter stay,” Della repeated the statement in a tone which indicated that she had heard it for the first time. “Whuh yuh mean dat hit ain’t right?” she asked, not so much questioning him but herself.

“Ah means dat hit jist ain’t right. Yuh done sinned agin’ him, ain’t yuh? An’ Ah means is you gwine lib wid a man whut yuh done sinned agin’? Das whut Ah means.”

“Oh Gawd, Ah’s done sinned.”

“An’, honey, now’s yer chance. Ah’s gwine leab termorrow; an’s Ah’s done axed yuh ter go. We kin leab ternight. You’s done sinned; you knows hit ain’t right fer yuh ter stay.”

“Oh Lawdy, oh Lawdy, he’p me.”

“De Lawd ain’t gwine he’p yuh; you is got ter he’p yo’self. An’ now, sister, I is leabin’. Yuh kin tek me er not. In fac’, sister, Ah is leabin’ ternight.” Spark seemed suddenly inspired by his own argument, as he stood there in napoleonic posture, waiting at the door. A long pause followed. Then he opened the door half wide and said, “An’ now, sister, good night.”

Della stood quietly there in the

flickering light of the lamp, apparently unaware of Spark's departure, her emotional fears and desires quieted by an emotional reasoning. Was Spark right? Was it right for her to live with Kris? Was she bound to that man so much older than herself? Why was she bound? Did she love him? Had she not seen a whole new world for the first time tonight? Oh God, what should she do?

Then a mortal fear flashed upon Della: Kris would soon be back. He would come back and see sin upon her; he would see sin on the walls of his house. What could she say to him? What could she do? The fear, the sudden fear of meeting Kris killed the doubt. Della turned to the door where Spark had stood. She would go with him! She would go with him!

Spark had not reached the copse of wood bordering the lot before he

heard Della calling: "Aw, Spark, Ah's gwine wid yuh. Ah's gwine! Ah's gwine! Wait fer me! Wait fer me!"

Spark turned under the branches of a small poplar and waited.

"You wuz right," Della called. "Ah is leabin' ternight. Ah is gwine wid yuh now. Hit ain't right fer me ter stay."

The two negroes met under the tree, and together set out through the woods to Spark's quarters in the big barn.

Not a great while later they left by the old river road in a buggy drawn by the mule that Spark had been plowing for the last two years.

Some other plantation, though, will receive them into its world and perhaps, in time, bring them a measure of happiness.



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Contents

EDITORIAL	3
IN INDIA INK: INTERDICT (<i>story</i>).....	5
By Virginia Stait	
BALLAD OF ONE YOUNG MAID (<i>verse</i>).....	13
By Frances Dickenson Pinder	
THE SURENESS OF BRIDGES (<i>verse</i>).....	15
By David Cornel DeJong	
IN CHURCH (<i>verse</i>).....	16
By Raven I. McDavid, Jr.	
JETHRO (<i>play</i>).....	17
By J. B. Clark	
SO PRIMITIVE (<i>sketch</i>).....	20
By P. Burwell Rogers	
Book Reviews: Edited by J. L. Stewart.....	25
Marie Updike White, Thomas C. Morgan, Charles R. Anderson, Ovid W. Pierce, Elizabeth Bulluck, Raven I. McDavid, Jr., Mar- shall Pritchett, George Harwell, Edgar J. Hocutt, Charles E. Landon.	
The Contributors.....	36
The Editor	



WASHINGTON DUKE

The ARCHIVE

November, 1931

Vol. XLIV

No. 2

EDITORIAL

Writers are not the last people to sense the change of times. All evidence hastily assembled seems to disprove this; for the great body of writers whom we know have written about things settled, states of society that have been so for twenty and thirty and fifty years. They have been given to the study of locales, characterizations of which have become platitudinous. A fixed thing is the easiest subject of portrayal. Consider how many novels have been written on the polite, mannered English society which has its roots back in the reign of the Georges. Even the subjects of Hardy's Wessex novels were set, definite, secure, before he portrayed them. Here in America has this been so, particularly in the South where the dead past has inspired more writers than any other one thing. Elsewhere in America the subjects for plays, novels, and poetry have been things as they are, and not as they will be. In realistic literature this is well-nigh necessarily so. The cause for this holding the future in abeyance may possibly be the inability

of a writer to wrench himself immediately from the works of his predecessors, at least his reluctance to try something untried. It is natural that literature should grow, should develop, from literature.

On the other hand, it seems to us, there has been in more recent years an opposing tendency—the tendency for writers to look at the present—not for what it is, but for what the signs indicate it may someday be. Some of the younger and perhaps more far-seeing of the writers have been caught in the spirit of change, of unrest. They have been led to sense the day that is to come. They have found the latest day more pregnant, more vital, than yesterday. There perhaps are a good many reasons for this, most of which are obvious. In all other aspects of our present-day life and thought there is nothing definitely set, settled. In religion, in science, in government, the question is always *Whither, Whither?* There seems to be no answer. Men will not venture to say. It is in this confused, onrush of modern life that a goodly number

of the modern writers have been caught. They are trying to interpret something for which yet there can be no reasoned interpretation. They can merely sense the change, sense the trend of modern affairs.

The fact is, consequently, that there is more material today for young writers than there has ever been before. Mr. Paul Green recently expressed his opinion, with particular reference to life in North Carolina, that today there is a great need for writers who can feel the change and who can speak for those great classes of people who are now in the state of economic, political, and social uncertainty. Everywhere there is protest, revolt, against whom nobody knows.

In a recent New York newspaper review of Mr. Green's *The House of Connelly* was given this quotation from him: "And what material we have had and put to no use! Material for music, poem pictures, novels, songs—matter for dreams. But we've had no dreamers. Where is the man, where are the men? Come out of your hiding places. . . . Where shall we find him who shall light up the struggles of our people? Who will tell of the builders, the roadmakers, the pioneers, the builders of cities, or railroads? Who tells the romance of the farmer's life among his tobacco, his cotton and corn? Nobody."

The House of Connelly

Paul Green's new play opened on October 12th at the Martin Beck Theatre, New York, and marked another adventure in interpretation of the

Old-New South. "The House of Connelly" tells of the end of a tradition, and, perhaps, of the beginning of a new. It pulls the curtain down on a decayed era, and hints, in the candle-light of its last scene, of new growths, of green things. There is nothing of uniqueness in this theme. To us it seems almost a commonplace. Its substance has been reflected in politics, in the press, in the schools, in every aspect of Southern life. Odum, in *An American Epoch*, cut through the tangle of the tale with a sociological analysis. Yet, despite this, Paul Green's play has point and force; in the rigid economy of dramatic technique, it sums up the change.

There is Mrs. Connelly, the aged mother, Geraldine and Evelyn, her daughters, Will, her son, and Robert Connelly, the uncle. This is the house of Connelly. Add the estate, loaded with debt, and with its soil depleted. The year is 1905. Appomattox is as yet not far away. The pride, the customs, and the memories of another South linger in the persons of Uncle Bob, the mother, and the daughters. Their minds are fastened to the past; they cannot move out of its circumscribed pattern. But Will, the son, is of neither the past nor the present. Although he rejects the traditions that shaped the destiny of his family, he cannot begin the construction of a new tradition, of a new way of life. The last of a house made degenerate by inertia and by the lust of its males, he sees no escape from a futile existence among beings without reality.

(Continued on page 34)

In India Ink

Interdict

By VIRGINIA STAIT

THE clocks of life strike strangely in India. Sometimes they are as rapid as if they measured whirlwinds, or slow as an hour glass measures sand. Occasionally there is a double stroke.

John Doxley Hammond, formerly of—what matters the native inch when the name christens him English—and his son, Stewart Hunnington Hammond, were as alike in their habits and business methods as they were in personal appearance. Scrupulous, upright, straight-forward men, they were of the class that has made England—England. They were of the class that has given to the home land her Imperial British Dominions.

Hammond, who had lost his wife and was in the civil service, had but this one son and it was his “dream with Allah” that Stewart should follow in his footsteps. This Stewart had done at English schools, at an English University and in entering his father’s branch of the civil service. Now, just returned from England, there had been no real divergence between the two until—

“It is—curious.” Stewart added the last word slowly, as if trying to find the right one, as if trying not to hurt his father, as if trying to fathom a small part of his father’s meaning.

They were in Hammond’s house in

Delhi where both lived, that wonderful city sieged and sacked eight times, bearing scars as diadems. Stewart cared for this country in much the same way as his father, seeing it largely as a great adjunct to England, not concerning himself unduly with silent faiths and loud beliefs. They rendered unto their Caesar and it left India very bare. Hammond, though, knew well the great risks and grave dangers of this exultant sun-land, but Stewart—did not even know they existed.

“Of the thousands of English here, is it so strange that I ask you to cease all intercourse with one family?” Hammond tried to speak lightly, but his son recognized the effort in the other’s grim mouth, in the deeper wrinkle between the eyebrows. That this was something that greatly disturbed his practical, matter-of-fact father, Stewart could not doubt.

“Strange! It is one of the strangest things I ever knew! You ask me to have nothing more to do with people I have known since I was a child.—Mr. Caldwell, your old college friend in England—it is almost unbelievable. And you give no reason. I—” Stewart checked himself.

Hammond’s gray head had bowed before the quick onrush of words. Stewart remembered the long years in

which his father had been to him everything—and was now. There was some overwhelming reason, or his father believed so.

"If you could only tell me?" Stewart repeated the words he had used again and again in this hour.

Hammond did not reply. After the silence had lasted a full minute Stewart continued, "There is one question I would like to ask and if you will answer that I will not urge you further. I know that you have what you consider an all sufficient reason in telling me this and no more, but you are deciding arbitrarily in a matter that is—important to me."

"In a year, I trust, it will be forgotten," said the older man, gazing out through the window where a mimosa triumphed in her reign of flowers. His eyes expressed pain. This was the first large difference between them and he knew it would be long before his son forgot—if he ever did. But he *could not* tell him—and his boy was like him in tenacity.

Stewart said nothing, but his eyes, too, went out to far horizons, to the morrows of his dreams.

Hammond turned in his chair and faced his son directly. "You can ask me one question and I will answer it."

"No matter what?"

"No matter, I will answer it."

"Is it because the young Caldwells have, or you suspect they have, Anglo-Indian blood?" Stewart's voice told his anxiety. Caldwell had married in India—Perhaps it was some trace of the blood which the English, French and Portuguese abhor, which the In-

dians themselves deny, ostracize. Perhaps his father had just discovered—

Hammond looked squarely in his son's face, that look which is as a sealed oath among men of honor. "I can certainly answer that, they have no drop of mixed blood. Caldwell came here about the same time that I did and married here, into a fine old English family." He added the last words thoughtfully, as one desirous of rendering every justice.

"Thank you, Father," the young man replied, a look of unimaginable relief upon his face. After a moment's pause he went out under the bannered sky that had been darkened by a sand storm earlier in the day and was now piecing together its immense canopy of vivid blue and shimmering gold. The aureous light poured down upon their garden of eastern trees, ajar, gondserai, acacia, betel palm, carab. There were etchings and blur-rings in shadow and flame, a green heaven rivaled the blue. Stewart gazed at it with the appreciation of one who had been absent for years. He could value this even if a pariah's life-long crucifixion left him unaware, if he read no faith in the instant remission of sin at Allahabad . . .

Such an upreaching sky! His father was worrying over some little thing that threatened—as dust on the eyelid. And should be as lightly brushed away. There *could* be nothing vitally wrong with the Caldwells. He must not badger his father. The years of all-receiving were too many. He must take this trouble and investigate it, point by point, until it was elucidated.

The two families had lived in Delhi for years. Sibert Caldwell and his father had been warm friends, with the enduring friendship that trusted where it did not know. Caldwell was not in the civil service now—he was much older than Hammond—and his family consisted of two sons and a daughter. It was Marian Caldwell against whom his father had pronounced sentence!

Stewart had played with her, fought with her—the thought was unthinkable now!—and, back from England, fallen in love with her. As soon as he had decided what his different interest in her meant he went to his father, as he had in every crisis of life, and was told—that his father would not consider it for a moment and not alone that, but he desired all intercourse between the two families to be at an end.

Stranger than strange he said that his old friend, Sibert Caldwell, had talked the matter over with him and together this was desired. Together!

Then—was it possible there was something in his father's life that precluded—This thought so menaced Stewart that he went to the library and stood long before the exquisite portrait of his dead mother, and that evening he gazed long at his father's patrician face, the whole clean make of this Englishman.

There was no wrong doing *here*, he decided, so it must be *there*. For a space he almost wished his father a Hindu! Among them nothing is so desired as a son's marriage in order that the family be not only extended,

but that a father has flesh of his own flesh to pray for him when he is dead and by this means escape damnation.

The decision of his father was past belief. It occupied his mind more than the thought of separation from Marian, for these were the days of first love when the mind and heart scarcely venture beyond the image of the beloved. He was certain he could discover the reason for this—tempest in a teapot. He would hire a detective, if necessary.

By every means in his power did he carry out this resolve, to find that there was absolutely nothing with which to begin an investigation. The life of Caldwell and his family were as an open book. Stewart went so far as to promise the firm, when he finally sought the aid of one of their detectives, Blackwell, a large sum if the matter was satisfactorily cleared up, and the man worked like a ferret.

But there was nothing he could discover, not even unpaid debts in this land of promises. Stewart went himself to Caldwell and found—a blank wall.

English Delhi was very busy at this time. The English were trying to obtain equity—or what was as near it in the east as the pearls that are obtained without asking!—for decoity that just stopped short of murder. Stewart was planning the details. But through it all India gave him of her lotus flowers in this love-time, with their passion and longing and assuagement. It seemed to him, as he walked under tropical trees with their impenetrable green and far-near mystery.

that just missed speech in their acceptance and refusal of the things of life, it seemed to him that India's paradises were as plentiful as her idols.

When the equity matter was as nearly finished as it probably ever would be with the Pathan tribe, Stewart saw vistas—that he had not entered. Unrest followed. His father had asked for no promise, but Stewart felt himself bound for the present. Still there was nothing discoverable—And circumstances were against him.

He saw Marian occasionally. At first—he judged it was after her father had told her that intercourse must cease—she seemed a little shy. At Mrs. Donaldson's dinner it was easy for her to avoid him, if she had done so. For himself he neither avoided nor sought her. But this could not last.

It was at the Hazelboroughs', who gave a small dance, that they were finally brought together. Three months had passed since Hammond's ultimatum, just time enough for Stewart to swing from perplexity and vacillation to rebellion.

Marian looked particularly well upon this occasion. Not very tall, slender, she had patrician hands and feet and nose "the three things that betoken caste." For the rest she owned grave brown eyes and a small mouth that could express determination at times. A girl to look things very squarely in the face. She was standing just inside the door as Stewart entered, talking to a couple of men and for the fraction of a second she

hesitated before reaching out her hand.

"It is the most absolute nonsense," she then laughed. In some way they were separated from the men, the small crowd, and Stewart found himself walking by her side in the most beautiful gardens in Delhi. If it had not so happened, he wondered afterward, would he have sought her out? And he decided—yes! There were some things that no one should determine for another. It was the harshest thought he had ever had of his father.

They were in a palm grove, arranged on the plan of an immense summer house. Small palms were so planted as to form a low wall, some four feet high. Outside of this were taller palms and beyond these still taller ones forming, at last, the most exquisite retreat, made entirely of fronds. It was hung with two Moorish lamps of bronze, burning such a low, yellow light they appeared to be dim moons. The air was almost stained by the perfume that came from trees and flowers, rose, orange and citronella, cassia, heliotrope and acacia. They poured forth the melody of scent, violet on lavender, jasmine on rosewood.

If there were no such thing as love it could have originated here! To Marian and Stewart it was something stronger than their wills that moved them now.

"It is the most absolute nonsense," repeated Marian, her voice gay as one who had tried the case and decided it. Stewart found, in fact, that this was just what she had done. She

had had it over with her father again and again and she knew no more than Stewart. "It may be a cooked up plan to make us think more of each other," she finished her recital of the matter, her cheeks the most scandalous pink at the words.

Perhaps if it had not been for this prohibition, Marian thought, she might have hesitated when Stewart asked her, in the difficult words we speak when our all is at stake, to become his wife. As it was they left this place of dreams engaged.

Stewart went directly to his father and told him of it, as he had told him before of his love. A thousand doors may be closed, say the Hindus, but the direct one is open.

"I have waited for months," Stewart's tone was very resolved, "hoping you would give me some explanation or that you would tell me the cause was removed. But you must know, Father," his voice softening at something akin to fright in the old eyes that he had never before seen flinch, "this was not premeditated. It was the most beautiful night." In these stereotyped words did he collect color and shadow, the chime and clash of perfume, the unimaginable mingling of star-light and avid green.

His father rose from his chair and walked up and down the room, a sign with him of great agitation. "It is the first time you have ever gone against my wishes and—I cannot tell you how serious the consequences may be."

"Even if you are unable to tell me

what it is, cannot you tell me the cause?"

"No, no, no!"

"Father, is it a pledge you have made?"

"No."

They were both English, trained in that school repressive of feeling, therefore both were aware that the short, direct questions and answers held some of the finalities of the matter.

Stewart hesitated. Yet he must attempt every fortification—if the defenses were strengthened by so doing. The determination in his father's face was the determination he had seen in Caldwell's on the occasion of an expected uprising. Both men remained at their posts when they knew their lives were in danger, soldiers in that higher sense that consecrates to the duty of life and therefore to the duty of death. Hammond's no meant no.

Stewart's face whitened a little. "Then I shall go on blindly, not knowing what arms to take against this thing that threatens—my life." He uttered the last words after a little pause, wondering if it did go as far as that.

"It not only threatens your life but every prospect the world holds for you."

"And it is only *your will* that keeps me from knowing what it is?"

"It is only my will that decides you are not to know."

They separated without another word. It seemed the refinement of cruelty, yet Stewart knew his father's

every hope was bound up in him, as he knew, too, that Caldwell was devoted to his daughter.

It was this India! Something had happened here, in this land of follies and disasters, of blood and pilgrimage, of desperation and self-slaughter. His father had endured some of the bitter of these things and was inflicting the last drop on himself and on flesh dearer than his own. Allah Akbar! Allah Akbar! The tortured cry of old goes up, sometimes, from alien lips.

The life in India is woven with no thread of life in England. Here one has to face dangers known and unknown and the last are the more terrible. Incur Indian hatred and for years one might expect any injury. The great Blue Books of England, in which are recorded some of India's secrets, lock things that cannot be given to the public. And her unrecorded secrets are as numerous as sparks of fire—and smoulder to conflagrations.

"It is something awful, I think," Marian said to him, after they had been engaged a few days and she began to face the realities of their position, her father's terrible anger and silence, Hammond's stern words when she went to him in her young distress. "It seemed nonsense to me at first—I wanted you to think it was—but now—"

Still she did not say the words with any despondency. As is often the case with very determined people her nature was buoyant. Stewart had just put the matter to her most

gravely, as he felt it to be his duty. But after these words she cast off its burden, as it were.

"This day will never come back again," she said, reaching out her arms as if to embrace the world. "I am willing to face whatever you may have to face. Let us drink of the water while it runs."

"I have never measured time by time," answered Stewart. "A day may hold its years of good and bad and, as the Indians say, to both the ant and the elephant must come the end."

At the request of both fathers the lovers decided to wait a year before marriage. "They think we will be tired of each other by that time," laughed Marian. She was gay now, about everything. Having accepted the fact that there might be a mountain in the pass she did not measure it. And the months to the year came and went.

With the passing of the tenth month Hammond became very despondent. Putting this and that together, his solicitude for his son, his lack of interest in business matters, Stewart concluded that something had occurred concerning the interdict. So the young people called it.

It was six weeks to the wedding day when Hammond gave a stag dinner to Alfred Comstock's son, to introduce him to the men who would be his associates in the civil service. Because young cubs are generally so uninteresting, Hammond said, he added the names of three of his cronies to the

list, Sir Randal Pritchard, Thomas Hunt and Dr. McFarland.

The first two were jovial men and many a laugh and jest went around as the benedictine and chartreuse circulated. McFarland was always more or less grave but the others seemed in particularly gay spirits. To be sure Thomas Hunt drank more wine than was good for him and McFarland ate more nuts than Stewart—who passed them—had ever seen eaten at one time, but the two things prolonged the evening.

Hammond was always brighter for days after such intercourse, but tonight he was abstracted, dejected. He went to his room after the last guest had gone, McFarland, and Stewart saw him no more that evening.

The next morning the unbelievable happened. Hammond sent for his son by Sumna, who, with his impressive obeisance and confidential manner, made one think each and every trifle of importance. He should have been an African hautboy, the wail of the east was in every movement.

Stewart followed him, and as Sumna opened the door Stewart knew from his father's attitude that he would hear something momentous. Hammond was deep in his chair, motionless to the point of collapse, only his eyes seemed to be alive. Stewart started to speak but an imperative gesture of the hands stopped him.

"I have something of importance to say to you. . . . I withdraw my objection to your marriage. It is not that I disapprove of it less, but that the

circumstances are altered." His voice deepened as he added, "There shall be no more strife between us."

"Strife?"

"Call it what you will; my bread has been bitter for many months."

"And so has mine, but if you loved—"

"Loved!" Hammond straightened himself in his chair, seemed to grow erect, young.

"You are too much like me not to love deeply, but wait until you have buried your love—then you can speak the word."

For the moment he was in the past and for the moment Stewart tried to fathom that agony. Then he turned away.

His father's tense attitude and suffering eyes told that he could endure no further strain. The strange affair was disposed of in one way. If only his father did not watch him so constantly, with the eyes of love—and dread.

Stewart bought and furnished a home for his wife, Hammond having said no word of their living together, and after their marriage they moved in it. And they reiterated, this new husband and wife, that no matter what came, *no matter what came*—Allah Akbar, Allah Akbar!—they would be willing to lock themselves in its prison.

Three months later, between first-night and midnight, Hammond heard the knock at his door, the terrible, continuous knock that told of disaster. He opened the door himself. Stewart stood there, white to the lips, with

such agony in his eyes that his father knew the supreme hour had come. And another must follow it.

Stewart tried to speak but the words failed him.

"I know," said his father. He rang for Sumna and when the wine was brought poured out a large glass of fiery Spanish liquor and stood over his son until he had drained the last drop.

"McFarland told me," Hammond then said, "that he *thought* so, when I first spoke to you. But you—when did you know?"

"An hour ago—she is asleep now. She has had some slight trouble with her foot for months and McFarland's eyes told me. The tiny spot of gray, the margin of red—leprosy—leprosy!"

The last two words were not so much spoken as torn from his heart. There was a silence and the color crept back to his face. He spoke again. "There are some things I must know. Hell could hold no torture as great as ignorance now."

Hammond held up his hand, the old authoritative gesture. "Did not McFarland tell you he believed this to be *lepra*, not leprosy? If so it is possible to cure it. It can continue for years without treatment and not be injurious to health. With treatment—everything is possible now."

"Yes, he said that—but if he is mistaken. . . . Father, I would not undo my marriage if I could. I would have married Marian sooner had I

known this, to help her to bear it—but why did you not tell me, why finally consent?"

"There were two reasons. Had you known it you would but have hastened your marriage. You have just said so."

"Yes, *yes*."

"At the time Caldwell and I desired all intercourse to cease McFarland thought it might be—" he paused, not saying the word, "in its worse form. He could not say positively. When you became engaged I could but stipulate for time. In a year he was sure he would know."

"And because he thought it *lepra* you consented?"

"Why I finally consented you will have to know soon. You wish me to tell you now?"

"Yes, *yes*."

"I iterate *lepra* is not leprosy and it is perfectly possible to cure it. It is neither inheritable nor contagious. Will you remember that while I tell you?"

Through his mental agony Stewart realized that there was more torture to endure. His lips stiffened. He could only repeat his former words, "Yes, *yes*."

"When I gave that dinner some weeks ago and McFarland repeatedly asked you for the nuts it was to ascertain something of which he was in ignorance. At the spot where your thumb joins your left hand there is a small spot—"

THE END.

POETRY

Ballad of One Young Maid

("... those English who escaped the slaughter at Roanoke, that ill-fated Virginia Colony, . . . four men, two boys, and one young maid." Strachy's *History of Travaile*.)

By FRANCES DICKENSON PINDER

Green was the forest, secret, still,
Level under a turquoise sky,
Masking death and the fear of death
Where in its ambush the Red Men lie.

Thrice had the young maid watched it turn
From green to gold at fall of the year,
Afraid of the cloaking green that crept
After the winter stark with fear.

Green it was as the English May,
Sown with flowers and bright of wing,
But death lurked under the greenwood bough,
And far away was the English spring.

Far away and the sea between
Mocking their hopes each day anew,
With tempering gales for the sails of Spain—
Shadow of black on a world of blue.

Stout and tall was the brave stockade,
Four-square true to forest and sea,
But the Spanish guns might level it there—
And the forest waited till this should be.

Crouched and still as a jungle beast,
It sprawled in the golden sun all day—
Terror of darkness, it crouched all night,
Holding the lone stockade at bay.

Out of the east, threat of the sea,
 Ever to westward, masked with bloom,
 The forest closed with the creeping tides,
 Hemming them in to a certain doom.

Who shall measure the weight of fear?—
 Gauge the moment when reason, will,
 Drained of hope, turn desperate, rash,
 Dicing with Death on his own door-sill!

Hope deferred and a dwindling store
 Drove them forth from the tall stockade—
 Could they win through to Cro-a-tan,
 They would be safe enough, they said.

Cro-a-tan, the Llanian town,
 Fifty miles by a hostile trail,
 Where a friendly tribe might welcome them—
 If luck held true, if they did not fail!

Then lest the English ships should come,
 Find them vanished and think them lost,
 They carved the one word, Cro-a-tan,
 There where two of the green trails crossed. . . .

But patient, cruel as some bright beast,
 The forest waited where two trails meet—
 Blood on the leaf, blood on the flower,
 And a bloody trail for a young maid's feet!

Never a trace did the forest yield,
 Only a rumor to cheat the truth—
 Only a legend to garland Spring
 When youth on a green trail calls to youth!

The Sureness of Bridges

By DAVID CORNEL DEJONG

The wind tapers to silence among the trees,
And we sit, watching the eddying of leaves
On scoured gravel, and compute the wisdom of Saul
On a night in Endor with slow speech, and faint
Desires for the rest of leaves, or wild songs
Flung on the tepid silence.

Once on a day at Utrecht, with the sun
On the tower, and the dusk's odd deliberations
Playing our temples, we encountered a child,
Sage, beneath the lindens, molding the last of sunlight
On a quay to laughter, and shouting three days
Of fulness in the hour that blackened
From twilight to the swoop of nightfall.

On the shorelines of Huron, the grizzlings counseled
An esplanade of calmness, guiding the thoughts like feet
On the beaches of unpausing music of water,
Carrying the starlight on hands too bent for
The swiftness of water, and found conclusions
Like stone gates into gardens, with the flutter
Of many blades and leaves and petals.

We have not the wisdom of children, the chuckle
Of sages, the rumble of leaves drones the music
Of seas, the wind's glum silence drops a path
Of shadow from here to the sun, and only cavils
On Saul and witches of Endor, span a bridge
Over valleys of silence and gorges of laughter,
To the sureness of damp reeking houses on clay,
Against the marvel of nightfall.

In Church

By RAVEN I. McDAVID, JR.

Dull voice of preacher droning platitudes—
 Theme, words, tone, gestures all the very same
 That he has used a hundred time before—
 A dozen nodding heads—some stifled yawns—
 A sneeze that wakes the drowsy with a start—
 A few old people, wrinkled faces raised
 To catch the crumbs of truth the speaker drops—
 A plea for money—yawns again—except
 That in the gallery young men sit at ease,
 Attentive, watching brilliant-colored dresses—
 Gay spots of brown, green, crimson, blue, and gold—
 Or black mosaic—strikingly stand out
 Against the drabness of the plastered walls—
 Fur collars, gaily colored scarfs, black ringlets
 Half hidden by a turban or beret—
 Or old Eugenie's derbies, modernized—
 Red lips—rouged, powdered faces—much alike—
 No really stunning beauty there—and yet
 Each is somebody's Cleopatra—pause—
 The preacher clears his throat—all rise—some sing—
 Up in the gallery are smiles and glances,
 As would-be lovers arrange their next week's dates—
 Coats put on—noise of shuffling feet—departures—
 Down in the pews the women crane their necks
 To scrutinize the latest styles in hats.

Jethro

By J. B. CLARK

CAST

JETHRO, *the man.*

LYB, *the woman, his wife.*

MAMBA, *an old negro mammy.*

DOCTOR GILL.

A WORKMAN.

TIM, *the baby.*

SEVERAL LABORERS.

TIME

Early dawn of an April morning.

SCENE

A living room in a mill house.

SCENE

(The living room of Jethro. It is a small room with scant furnishings. The furniture is of the poorest type, very crude and old, suggesting the rudeness and poverty of a mill family. There is a window to the left in the rear wall through which may be seen the last faint stars of early dawn. At the rear center is a door which creaks and moans on its rusty hinges when it is opened. To the right of the door, parallel to the rear wall is an iron bedstead, the white enamel surface partially obliterated and scarred by ill usage. Upon it is arranged some bed linen, dingy with the over frequency of washing. The light from a fireplace in the left wall casts dark shadows about the room, lighting dimly the interior. There are only a few

dying embers on the hearth, suggesting an all-night vigil, that has been allowed to lapse with the coming of dawn. A cradle is placed by the hearth in order to allow the sleeping child as much warmth as possible. In the right wall a door leads out to the kitchen. The opening of the aperture is covered by curtains of faded and musty colors. There are a few chairs about the room and an antiquated trunk against the rear wall to the left of the door. Over the bed facing the audience is a huge framed picture of a woman. As the curtain rises the stage is deserted, but after a brief pause the rear door opens, giving a full view of the nearing dawn in the sky that is slowly brightening. The moon is full but wan and pale. Stars twinkle and the blue of the sky gives relief to the dreary appearance of the darkened room. A man enters through the rear door. He is Jethro—tall, angular—typical of the undernourished and confined textile worker. His face is thin and yellow, bearing traces of probable consumption, and his eyes, though beautiful with the power of youth, hold no light of hope. He is shabbily dressed and moves slowly with somewhat of a limp towards the fireplace. In his arms he carries a bundle of wood, and kneeling puts a few pieces on the embers. The fire does not catch at once and he

blows his breath to feed the sparks. The light reveals the sallowness of his face. There is hopelessness written in his expression. He is but a youth—but broken, weary. The fire lights up and he warms his hands. Then he rises and limps over to peer down at the infant in the cradle. He arranges the covers more comfortably about the child and bends over and kisses him. He lifts his face and wipes a tear that runs down his cheek.)

JETHRO (*softly*): Yo' pore lil thing!

(Through the right opening enters old Aunt Mamba carrying a lamp, which lights up only slightly more the darkened room. She is an aged colored woman, something like the grey-haired darky mammy of slave days. She is fat and buxom and kindly in her negro way.)

A. MAMBA (*placing lamp on mantle over the hearth*): Lawsy, dis fire sho feels good, Mistuh Jethro. Dese yere erly Spring maw'nin's chill a pusson clean thu'. (*She warms her hands.*) I done got de fire in de stove started, so twon't be long 'twill de breakfast is cookin'.

(Jethro has remained by the baby's side. He is gazing anxiously into the sleeping face of the child. Aunt Mamba notices him.)

A. MAMBA: Don' yo' worry bout dat precious lamb. De good Lawd He am gwine take care ub him. It's Mis Lib we got ter luk after, an' I'm 'fraid dat both uv us can't give her too much 'tenshun, 'case she's puny, po' child, and dere ain't no tellin' how long she gwine be here. What bein'

sick like she is and a-tryin' to work uv a night up yonder in dat ol' mill.

JETHRO (*patting Mamba on her back kindly*): I was thinkin' of Lib, too, Aunt Mamba. Thinkin' if somethin' was to happen to her what would come of—(*he nods towards the bed*)—of him. (*There is a strained silence before he speaks again.*) She ain't well, I know, but she's sech a good woman. She kept tellin' me all along, "I'm all right, Honey. It's you I'm thinking of. Right now you can't try to go back to work, 'cause you jest got out of the hospital, and if you went back on night time it might hurt you too much. But," she says and she were so sweet, "I can work 'till you git better and everything 'll be all right." She knows the bills have to be paid—what with my bein' up at the sanatorium and the baby comin' 'long, we jest ain't been able to make both ends meet. If 'twon't for you, Aunt Mamba, I don't see how we coulda got 'long.

MAMBA (*pushing him into a chair*): Dere you go again. Allus a-tellin' me how much good I is. I ain't nothin' but a no-count ol' nigger (*she sees he is hurt at her tone*). Aw, shucks, Marse Jethro, I'd do ebbythin' I cud for all yawl. I knowed yore maw and paw when you wont ev'n able to sit up 'thout fallin' over, and dey was good to me an' Unc. Zack. When Unc. Zack died dey helped me git him buried and, ev'n do dey didn't hab nuthin' eber, dey tuk me home wif 'em and give me a place to stay. I lubbed both uv 'em and I still do, ev'n do dey's daid—po' things—and I lub

yawl too jest the same. Ain't you give me a home wif you—ain't you fed me—and gib me ebbythin' you cud. Shucks (*she takes a huge bandanna from her apron pocket and blows her nose*), shucks yo' just shet right up and don' thank ol' Aunt Mamba no more fo' whut she done.

JETHRO (*clasping her hand*): Yore awful kind—I wanted you to know I 'preciated you—me and Lyb too.

MAMBA (*smiling broadly*): Dat's all right. Lawsey, de breakfast sho ought to be a-cookin', case de whistle'll soon be blowin' and Miss Lyb'll be in a hurry to get to bed, po' thing. (*She hurries out (right).*) (*Jethro gets up and moves slowly over to the window. He peers out. The sky is becoming lighter now—hazy, with a mistiness associated with peaceful sleep.*)

JETHRO (*dreamily*): Dawn is comin'. The stars are all hidin' and going to sleep. The sky's gettin' bright again. Soon I'll see the sun way over yonder—soon I'll see the sun. . . . (*Mamba enters from the right and goes over to pick up a few sticks of wood.*)

MAMBA: It's sho gittin' light now fast. Do'nspose Miss Lyb'll be skeered to be comin' home 'lone now, do you, Marse Jethro?

JETHRO (*still gazing out the window*): No, she won't be skeered now, Mamba. It's all so quiet and white and peaceful. God's made it light again so's He can watch her better.

MAMBA (*with wood in her arms coming over to him*): Yo' can say the purtiest things sometimes. I allus

told yore maw yo' were a good boy and dat yo' had sump'n in you dat not many folks has got.

JETHRO: I ain't got nothin' in me, Mamba, but hard luck. But I ain't complainin'. Long as I'm alive and got Lyb and our baby—I ain't gonna yell out none. (*Mamba starts towards the kitchen door, when Jethro starts suddenly on seeing something outside.*)

JETHRO: Look, Aunt Mamba, look. Somebody's a-comin' up the path bringin' a woman. Thar's a whole crowd—somebody's hurt. (*Silence—he still peers out.*) Lord! They're comin' here—it's—it's Lyb!!

MAMBA (*dropping the wood*): Oh! Lawd!

(*Jethro rushes to the door and swings it open. There is a bright red glow in the sky and the silhouette he forms as he stands peering out in the distance is striking. A crowd appears outside the door and Lyb is seen in the arms of two workmen who are supporting her. She is badly injured and Jethro can only utter the word "Lyb—Lyb" over and over again as they bring her in and lay her on the bed. Several of the group outside enter, all with hats in hand gazing at the woman. Jethro, who has followed every move of the workmen, sinks hurriedly on the bed by Lyb's side. She looks up at him weakly. Her hair is golden but faded slightly through neglect and poverty. Lines of worry are in her girlish face, although her smile is tender and twistful. She is frail in body but capable of carrying on through sheer will*

power—a brave, broken little mother.)

JETHRO (*stroking her hair*): Lyb, Lyb—speak to me, Honey. Tell me you're all right.

(A workman intercedes and taps Jethro on the back.)

WORKMAN: I wouldn't try to talk to her, Jethro, 'cause she's bung up pretty bad. And the doctor said to keep her quiet 'till he got yere. Sam jest called him from the office.

JETHRO (*jumping to his feet and grasping the workman with both hands*): What happened—how—.

WORKMAN: It happened all of a sudden-like and I don't know hardly how. I yeard her scream and I was in the other alley. We was in the cardroom upstairs. When I got 'round to her, my brother Sam had drug her out from under the feeder. She was all a-bleedin' and a-moanin' for the baby there and everybody was crowdin' 'round so there won't no air hardly 'tall. I didn't know hardly what to do, but then up rushed old Boss Miller and he yells to scatter and orders a bunch of us to bring Lyb on home. I picked her up and told Sam to phone Doc Gill. He ought to be gittin here by now.

(Lyb groans and calls for Jethro. He sinks again by her side.)

JETHRO: Here I am, Honey, don't worry. Everything's gonna be all right.

LYB (*weakly*): Oh Lord, Jetty, I know I'm gon die. Everything's gittin' black—I can't see and I'm—*(she grasps her side)* I'm hurtin' all inside. *(She gasps and clutches Jethro.)* The baby—where's Tim—where's my baby, Jet!

(Mamba, who has been crying by Jethro's side, runs over to the cradle and picks up the baby. She carries him over and places him by his mother's side.)

MAMBA: Here's de darlin', Miss Lyb, now don be carryin' on like dat. De good Lawd He ain't gon take you 'way jest now. Yo' lay dere quiet.

JETHRO: You lay still, Lyb. The doctor's comin' and you'll be all right.

LYB (*smiling sadly and slowly*): No, Jetty, 'tain't no use to say such things. I know they ain't true and you know they ain't. But to go away and leave—like—this. Jet—the baby—where's my baby?

JETHRO: In yore arms, Darling. You've got Tim. He's all right. You be quiet now. You be quiet.

LYB: Jethro! *(She calls as if she fears she is alone.)* Jethro! I can't leave you and Tim—I can't—I can't! Hold my hand—tight—that's right! Jethro, it's so cold—is the fire burning—hadn't you better get some more wood—Tim'll be catching cold—and you—you—*(She gasps and chokes. Jethro calls to her frenziedly.)*

JETHRO: Lyb, Lyb! Speak to me, Lyb! Don't go—you can't—you musn't! Lyb, Lyb!

(The door (rear) opens and Doctor Gill enters, satchel in hand. He is portly and very kindly—the mill-village doctor. He goes over to the bedside and Jethro sees him.)

JETHRO: Doc, you gotta do somethin'. You can't let her die, Doc, you can't.

GILL (*sitting in a chair by the bedside and examining Lyb*): Brace up

(to Jethro). Man, pull yourself together. I shall do all that I can. How long since this happened?

WORKMAN: About a half-hour, sir.

GILL: There's only one chance in ten, but I'll do my best.

(Lyb stirs on the bed and calls weakly for Jethro.)

LYB: Jethro, Jethro—the end's a-comin' now, I know. I can't see a thing—not a thing—come, let me touch your face—it's so cooling—so cooling.

JETHRO (trying to calm her): You're gonna be all right, Honey, the doctor said so.

GILL: Please be calm. She must not be disturbed. (He attempts to pull Jethro from her.)

LYB: Don't leave me, Jethro. I'm afraid—I'm afraid—(Jethro wrenches himself loose from Gill and rushes back to her). I love you, Jethro—you and Tim. You're his pa—you gotta be good to our baby—for me and you. . . . Look, there's the sun comin' in here—it's gittin' dawn, Jethro; the stars are gone now—everything's white—See, there it is before me—I can touch it—it's burning me—oh, it's got me, Jethro; I can't get loose—it's takin' me 'way, Jethro, I can't get loose—I don't want to go—help, help me Jethro—Jethro—

(She falls back—dead. Jethro is stunned. He looks at her without speaking. Mamba picks up the baby, places the sheet over Lyb's face, and goes over to the rocking chair, where she sits half-sobbing, half-choking as she croons a negro lullaby. The occupants of the room bow their heads

and the workmen leave one by one. Jethro continues to look at the still form under the sheet without speaking. Gill shakes his head. Through the open door is plainly seen the lighted sky. The color has changed from deep red to golden yellow. The chirping of birds may be heard, as the mill whistle is blown far in the distance. It is the warning whistle for the shifting of laborers. Jethro hears it and seems to come to his senses. He jumps to his feet and rushes to the door.)

JETHRO (savagely): Yes, blow, damn you, blow! Call all us back to slave and sweat our life's blood in doing yore work. We'll all be a-comin' back to be crushed and beaten—to have all that's good and best in us flogged out by cogs and belts. No matter whether you take away from us the things we love best—don't make no difference to none us po' devils. We'll be there to turn yore damn wheels—we're yore slaves. You do with us just like you wanta—you kill us—all us, like Lyb over thar—but thet's all right. I got a young un thar thet you go'n take some day—yes, you are if you can—but you *ain't*. No, God damn all you capitalists, I'd see you in Hell first!

(He shakes his fist savagely at the mill in the distance, and far away comes the sound of the last whistle for the day shift. Mamba still sits rocking the baby and crooning her ditty. The rays of the rising sun pour in through the door on Jethro's body and past to stretch over the lifeless form on the bed as

THE CURTAIN FALLS.)

So Primitive

By P. BURWELL ROGERS

THE "Meeting" had been in progress for nearly a week. The negroes for miles around had come to hear the preacher from away. Some of the younger folks hoped to be able to "seek" and "come th'u'" before the meetings ended. Already there had been several fortunate "seekers" who had "seen Jesus and were saved." One happy girl had told countless times how she had "seeked an' seeked fo' de light" and after much agony, during which time she had "hung ober Hell lak' a crab by a thread no bigger 'n a hyarh outta Miss Anne's head," had finally "come th'u'" safely. Other mysterious and miraculous experiences were likewise told. The testimonial part of the services was certainly a group of the most weird tales ever told. The meeting was indeed a great success.

Since the advent of the automobile the old-fashioned camp-meeting has almost passed away. This was not of the old-fashioned type. There was only the one large tent in the clearing where the services were being held. A few years ago the meeting-grounds would have included numberless smaller tents and shacks, for all the congregation would have camped on the grounds as long as the meetings lasted, making it truly a "camp-meeting." Although now the members of the congregation return to their

homes each night and the visiting preacher is taken care of in the home of the local pastor, the term "camp-meeting" still exists rather generally.

The clearing around the tent was filled with all sorts of nondescript vehicles—ancient automobiles which were in an undescrivable state of dilapidation, fairly decent second-hand cars, a few models of the cheaper makes, an occasional very shiny sedan, and, as contrast, a number of animal-drawn conveyances. Some of the negroes were sitting in the cars close to the tent where they could see and hear all. Others were walking around in the shadows about the outside of the tent. Among these people were a few white persons who had come to watch. The negroes are always glad to have the white people at their religious services if they come in the spirit of reverence and not out of curiosity and not to make fun of their ceremonies. Provisions, therefore, had been made for the visitors in the reservation of a few benches in front of the pulpit.

The meeting was in full swing. The preacher had gotten his congregation into a frenzy over the text "And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence." As the collection was being taken for the seventh time, for the visiting evangelist must be paid a good sum, the negroes sang at the top of their voices, swaying back and

forth. The perspiration rolled down their greasy black faces. Between the phrases of the song were shouts of "Yes, Lord!", "Bless Jesus!", "Hallelujah!", "Praise be!". Frequently from women who were emotionally affected came blood-curdling screams. Above all the noise of the singing and shouting was the voice of the preacher. He knew that he would be able to save some of the sinners tonight and the time was at hand. The congregation was keyed up to the proper pitch and all that was now needed was for someone to start things.

Now a large black woman got "happy." Letting out a piercing shriek, she jumped up and threw her arms in the air, rolled her eyes upward until only the whites showed, and fell limp into the arms of the man next to her. This was the beginning. Immediately people in other parts of the mob began to get religion too. It seemed that it was contagious. Soon the entire congregation was jumping up and down, dancing, capering, screaming, shouting, kneeling down and crying out for mercy and forgiveness, groveling in the sawdust on the ground. Pandemonium reigned supreme!

The pleased preacher made his way through the throng trying to urge those few who were yet unmoved to pray so that they too would "see the light and have their sins washed away and be as white as snow." His endeavors were in vain for if one had not already been affected by the action of that mob, the action of one man could not move him. However, he

continued his work, encouraging some of the sinners who had got religion for the first time, praying for this negro, telling that one to pray for himself and his brother too. As he moved among the surging bodies the sinners would cling to him in an effort to get his prayers and blessings.

During this stirring scene the white visitors inside the tent had been forced to leave their seats and take refuge in a corner near the platform. It was useless for them to try to leave even if they wanted to. It was evident that most of them had seen enough and now were only waiting for an opportunity to escape. Among this group were a young girl and a boy, both in evening clothes. They had passed the meeting grounds on the way to a dance and, on the spur of the moment, had decided to stop to watch for a few minutes. At first they had been among the crowd outside, but a negro woman who had washed clothes for Peggy's mother some years before, had seen them and escorted them to the front benches. Now they were trapped. Peggy clung to Jack's arm. She was greatly moved. Her expression was one of half fear and half pain. Leaning closer to Jack she screamed, "Oh, Jack, I can't stand this another minute! Let's get out of here!" With Peggy still at his arm, Jack pushed his way towards the back of the tent and soon the two were in the open again.

The dance-hall was gayly decorated. The lights were bright and a strong "spot" shone on the orchestra on the

platform. The music was the best that had been heard at any dance in these parts for sometime. The orchestra blared forth mightily, quieting down occasionally to act as an accompaniment for a soloist who blared forth mightily in song. The orchestra had several novelty numbers which had attracted much attention. It was "one hot band" and the dance was a "knock-out."

The floor was crowded. Each couple was trying to do a different step, and each seemed to be trying to do one that was more violent and intricate than the others. The dancers were making almost as much noise as the orchestra. They had to, if they wanted to make themselves heard. Apparently most of them wanted to

be heard. It *was* a dance.

Amid all this din and confusion was Peggy—in her glory. She paused a moment, breaking away from her partner who was a bit unsteady when he tried to stand without any support from her friend, to adjust her garters and to pull down her dress a little more snugly about her hips. She applied a streak of carmine to her lips. Then, "Come on, big boy! Let's go! Get hot there!" and off they went in a vigorous step.

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As Jack was taking Peggy home in the wee small hours of the morning, passing the now-quiet meeting grounds, Peggy, nestling a little closer, said, "Jack, they are so primitive!"



BOOK REVIEWS

A Premiere on the Legitimate

Death and Taxes. By Dorothy Parker. New York City: The Viking Press. 62 pp. \$1.75.

Dorothy Parker in the past rather over-patronized us with her state of super-disillusionment. She patted us on the head until I, at least, felt like proclaiming that I knew lots of things, too, and believed in practically nothing. I grew suspicious that her sunset guns and enough rope were meant for you—if not for me. And I got just a little fed up with the abundant humor of the imperfect rhyme. In fact only last month I tied it up in tissue paper and pink ribbon and wrote on it "From Erato to the Marx Brothers, with Love."

But evidently Mrs. Parker, too, has tired of being she who gets slapped. The modernistic circus has moved on, the costume play opens in its place. There she is, carrying lilies and roses, these in ashes, after the manner of Wilde and Dowson; finding relief like Swinburne in the finite; dressing in the more robust garments of Shakespeare and Francis Villon. At this premiere of Mrs. Parker on the legitimate stage, we are happy to be present. Our applause is earnest and sincere. At last she is revealing her poet's art unhampered by prose. What remains of her disillusionment is a pervading tone that finds expression chiefly in the sharp delight of a pungent turn in a last line, done somewhat in the manner of Heine, but with an adequate appearance of naïveté. For example let me quote such a poem as this—call it the new Hausmanism if you will!

PROLOGUE TO A SAGA

Maidens, gather not the yew,
Leave the glossy myrtle sleeping;
Any lad was born untrue,
Never a one is fit your weeping.

Pretty dears, your tumult cease;
Love's a fardel, burthening double.
Clear your hearts and have your peace—
Gangway girls: I'll show you trouble.

"Bitter" is still Mrs. Parker's key-adjective, but a certain mellowness indicating a healthy sense of humor is found in much that is contained in this volume. There are two excellent ballades. The first is entitled *Ballade of Unfortunate Mammals*. I would quote all but must limit myself to four lines:

L'Envoi:

Prince, a precept I'd leave for you,
Coined in Eden, existing yet:
Skirt the parlour, shun the zoo—
Women and elephants never forget.

The second is a reaction to much sympathetic good listening. It is called the *Ballade of a Talked-Off Ear*, and ends:

L'Envoi:

Prince or commoner, tenor or bass,
Painter or plumber or never-do-well,
Do me a favor and shut your face—
Poets alone should kiss and tell.

I have not said enough in praise of Mrs. Parker's latest volume. It contains a variety of excellences. One is surprised and moved by the objective simplicity of such poems as *To a New Mother* and *Guinevere at Her Fireside*. Mrs. Parker has learned from E. A. Robinson as well as from the decadents. She shows resource, vitality, and aptness. When she wishes in her *Summary* that she "knew a little more, or very much less" we feel that one shade the more, one ray the less might well disturb this nearly perfect grace.

MARIE UPDIKE WHITE.

A Modern Classic

Matthias at the Door. By Edwin Arlington Robinson. New York: The Macmillan Company. 99 pp. \$1.75.

In 1897 *The Children of the Night* made its silent entry into the world and since that time more and more admirers of American poetry have witnessed with ever increasing joy the subsequent contributions of Mr. Robinson to American literature. In an unhurried succession came *Captain Craig* in 1902, *The Town Down the River* in 1910, and *The Man Against the Sky* in 1916. The major landmarks from his pen from 1916 to 1929 were the three epics, *Merlin, matiere de Bretagne*, and *Tristan*; the poems *Tasker Norcross*, *Avon's Harvest*, *Rembrandt to Rembrandt*, and *The Glory of the Night-ingles*; the novel in verse, *Roman Bartholow*; the dramatic narrative, *The Man Who Died Twice*, and the fine collection of *Sonnets* (1889-1927). The early admirers of Mr. Robinson have been gratified by seeing the cultivated American readers won over to him *en masse*, and we may seek the explanation of this phenomenon in his latest poem, *Matthias at the Door*.

Mr. Robinson has given us a new study in verse of the underworld of emotions in the lives of four people, each of whom meets defeat in a different way. We are indebted to the poet for Garth, who—

... was alive
More with indifference than with life. His eyes
Were all there was of him that was a part
Of the original picture, and they lacked
A lustre that was right. They had seen more,
Perhaps, than eyes of men are meant to see
Of earth and earthy works.

Garth, who surmounted his futility only by dying

We see Timberlake:

... His face would have been hard
But for a gentleness that softened it
Somehow to a thin sort of living leather,
Brownier than red—a face for women to see,
While other faces waited. "I came home

And heard of Garth," he said, "and was no more surprised than you are. I have outlived surprise—"

Timberlake, the wise and gentle, who would "trust the chances" and not go until he was called—yet he "leaves a loneliness" in his absence.

We find Natalie who was thrust in a cage by fate, and who saw the years coming and wished herself extinct. Natalie, who gleamed "a sort of bravery" in Garth's "way out." Natalie, the woman who wondered if she was "different from the others," and who then fled her cage to her lover and—

... surprised him,
Who had outlived surprise, by seizing him
And holding his hot lips with hotter lips
That had alive in them the fire of death
To burn him till he knew what he had lost.

And then we have Matthias—"a man with nothing left but money and pride"—so wrapped in rectitude that even his eyes were filmed with it, so that it took a crushing blow to break "the rich web of his complacency." Matthias, who found Natalie "in a dream of heaven" and then lost her "in another dream of hell."

Mr. Robinson again shows his keen analytical power, but he is more than the attentive observed of character, the searching explorer of the secret conflicts of the heart; we feel in this poem the mastery of his suggestion, his compression of the experience of life into a phrase:

... Half the grief
Of living is our not seeing what's not to be
Before we see too well.

But these fine qualities alone would not endear him to his reader. It is his classicism that pleases the heart; the old-time qualities of intellectual acumen, broad humanity, universal appeal, decorum, sense of proportion and art of composition. It is true that in this poem we find such modern

traits as imaginative coloring, sensuous richness, and word melody, but the whole poem yields the impression of wealth of vision and felicity of technique. Here is found preference for the general, subordination of sensation to sensibility and of sensationalism to sense, propriety, and reserve—all of which announce the modern classicist.

THOMAS C. MORGAN.

The Urge for Respectability

Some Go Up. By Samuel Tupper, Jr. New York: Robert M. McBride and Co. 1931. 288 pp. \$2.00.

Some Go Up is the literary debut of a new Georgia novelist. It is a story of social climbers and social sinkers, on and off Peachtree Street in Atlanta, Georgia. Mr. Tupper writes of his native city with the close knowledge of one who has measured its sidewalks and its drawing rooms with his own feet, and his own eyes. Of the busy swarm of new novelists who offer their wares to an even more busy reading public, one feels that here is one who will be among those who go up.

Some Go Up is a seriously written comedy of manners, some of which are inbred and some acquired. The tale is of two families of the contemporary South. Over a period of some three decades (from the "Blue Danube" to "If I had a talking picture of you-hoo") they take their turn on the Wheel of Fortune, one rising towards the cherished top as the other falls from it. Artificial coincidence is averted by having the same motive force propel the two bouleversements. A bank failure brings the Ferrells, up in the world because of their birth and wealth, to low estate; a new merger, growing out of the crash, lifts the Millers—a bank clerk and his seamstress wife—out of social obscurity to within reach of the sugar-plums of their ambitious dreams.

While the Wheel makes it half-revolution, the destinies of the two little clans

hanging on the circumference are entwined through the spokes of the younger generation. As Clara Miller sews on the debutane gown of Sylvia Ferrell, she bites not so much her thread as her lip at the condescension of Grandmother Ferrell. She promises herself not to forget, even in the toils of climbing over the endless social barriers, as climb she must and will. In the end her daughter, poised on the coveted vantage ground of a Peachtree mansion, flutters down into the heart of Richard, the youngest Ferrell, who has been brought up unhampered by his family's former circumstances though not entirely innocent of the pride of their shabby gentility. In their second son, James Miller Ferrell, the high and low are brought irrevocably together.

A novel without a dominant character has limitations. In a tale of such short dimensions it is difficult to develop two family sagas. As a consequence, *Some Go Up* suffers from want of sustained power. Its diffuseness is particularly noticeable in the central portions of the story, where the varying careers of the lesser members of the two families are recorded, and the very necessary element of suspense is spun out to corresponding thinness. And this is true in spite of an otherwise nice sense of economy, both of words and of episodes. Regardless of the emphasis on tribal fortunes there are at least three arresting figures: old Mrs. Ferrell, the unbending bulwark of family pride and, incidentally, a new departure in fictional grandmothers; Sylvia Ferrell, whose dry-eyed tragedy is a story in itself; and, pitted against them, Clara Miller of the titian hair, the fair skin, and the rasping voice, who clambers doggedly up the social ladder. Strangely enough, the most effective scene deals with the milieu that, one instinctively suspects, is known to Mr. Tupper only through indirection. Jake Miller comes home to his duplex to an-

nounce that he has been made cashier of the new bank: "Throw out that soup! Throw out that soup! We're going to eat supper—dinner—at the Aragon Hotel, where everybody goes that amounts to anything." Jake wanted to order a thick steak with beer, but Clara ordered blue points and champagne.

It is pleasant to remember that life is, after all, so normal. One remembers the sage injunction of Atlanta's other novelist, Frances Newman, to the effect that realism is just as much tea-cups in the parlor as dish-pans in the kitchen—and even more so for most of us. The dust jacket declares that *Some Go Up* is as stimulating and refreshing as a clean-minded youth. One hastens to add that its chasteness, however, is healthy and not prim. Mr. Tupper writes at first hand in the idiom of his own generation, and the scenes of normal urban life in the South take form with convincing verisimilitude. Here is an integral sector of the modern American panorama.

CHARLES R. ANDERSON.

Sherwood Anderson Walks at Midnight

Perhaps Women. By Sherwood Anderson. New York: Horace Liveright, Inc. 144 pp. \$2.00.

Two horses are climbing a hillside: one is a strong, stalwart horse, his stiff ears pointed to the top of the hill; the other is a tired, bony horse, his ears drooped to the sides like the wings of an airplane. The strong horse is leading the way; it is ridden by a woman. The tired horse is following, lagging; it is ridden by a man. This is the cover picture for Mr. Anderson's book; it is the final picture of all his pages. Perhaps, perhaps women!

It is the song of the machine, the song which has been going on now for sixty years, but which only now has reached its volume, its force, its power. It is the song of America; everywhere it is the same song. This book is not pointedly a treatment of

the signs of our times; but curiously enough it is an echo of the signs of the times a century ago when Carlyle said that the machine was the grand characteristic of the age. One must think then that the song started a hundred years ago, and only today is it reaching its volume.

For a century it has been growing higher and higher; and today, at the point of its break, is Mr. Anderson concerned.

The book is written, as the author says, "partly in story form, partly in broken verse, partly in opinions, thrust out at the readers." It is the informal, the genial, the human Andersonesque prose. It is a study in story form. It is the final expression of a great many impressions, and of convictions. From the deserted farm lands, the small mill towns, the factories, Mr. Anderson has received these impressions. He has stood for hours in a great factory, watching the great belts pull, the looms dance, hearing the spindles and the bobbins sing. He has seen the apathetic eyes of tired workmen as they stand there, parts of the machine, pulling levers, pressing buttons, doing an essential but small part of the work that the great machines are doing. He has gone back to the factory at the dead of night, when a new shift is on. The town all around is lying asleep, the machine is the only live thing, the only thing that does not rest. The cold blue light of the factory is the only light of the town. The human beings are the servants; they will come back when they have slept; they will throw themselves into the machine, become a part of the machine.

Where has this machine god carried us, where will it carry us?

The latter half of Mr. Anderson's book is an attempt to answer. It is an expression of his belief. The machine has done something to modern man: it has weakened him. It has pressed out his individuality; it has rendered him impotent. Man's superiority, his strength, his confidence, he has got from

the feeling that he was accomplishing with his hands and his mind, that he was a part of life, that he was building life. Now the machine has crushed that out, has made man its servant. Another adjustment in our affairs will have to be made; the machine has given man a vicarious power, a feeling of insecurity.

And then comes the final note of Mr. Anderson's song: perhaps women have remained untouched by the ruthless command of the machine. "It may, if she becomes a machine operator, tire her physically but it cannot paralyze or make impotent her spirit. She remains, as she will remain, a being with a hidden inner life. The machine can never bring children into the world." This is Mr. Anderson's answer to the machine song: women must lead, must take the places of men. Mr. Anderson has seen an inevitable matriarchy.

This book, as its jacket announces, will arouse discussion and create many partizans; it is a challenge to the male potency of our civilization. But before making a concession by logic to this inevitable matriarchy, one must ask how universal, how widespread is the effect that the machine has had on the male.

OID W. PIERCE.

A Troubled Indian

Sparks Fly Upward. By Oliver La Farge. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 346 pp. \$2.50.

Oliver La Farge, awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1929 for "Laughing Boy" has written another story of an Indian, and no one is better fitted to do so, for he spends a great part of his time in the Southwest and in Central America.

Esteban, the principal character, lives not among the whites, but with them. Part Spanish by his father, he is reared on the

rancho of Don Geronimo Gerromayor, in gratitude for a kindness done to Don Geronimo by Esteban's Indian mother. Though he is treated with kindness and respect, Esteban feels that he is not justifying his existence. He is placed among the ruling class, almost as an equal, and though he thus obtains an understanding view of their sometimes ruthless dealings with the Indians and their deep-rooted feeling of an inalienable right to be masters, his Indian blood is forever warring with this conception.

Given a start in the army by his protector, and quickly advancing, hoping to win the favor of Senora Gerromayor, he becomes general and lover. But that is not enough. Why not? Circumstances had put these things in his way, a man has only himself as a permanent possession, all else is inconsequential. Why not grab? But here was the torture of it. "God made him, shaped him, put a use upon him, and then gave him a will to tear him to pieces." He recognized the use that God had put upon him and had not willed to justify it. But it is not too late.

He turns from the beautiful Favia to find solace in the arms of an Indian maid, and gives up his secure position in the army to become a revolutionary leader. He is not happy, and can never be, but he is content.

The story is a beautiful recording of the restless, eternal, but fruitless search of man for happiness, told not only with words, but with a convincing example in the experiences of Esteban. La Farge is not the first to advocate this. We all know it sooner or later in our own lives. But he offers a substitute, and proves it to be a good one—the satisfaction of a life lived to some purpose; the joy derived from a work well done. No one need hope for more.

ELIZABETH BULLUCK.

Harper Prize Novel

Brothers in the West. By Robert Reynolds. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1931. 299 pp. \$2.50.

Although the fact that a novel by a writer hitherto unheard of—his first published work of any sort—should reach its twelfth printing in a few months does not necessarily signify anything, nevertheless it is enough to attract one's interest, regardless of the inherent quality of the work.

Brothers in the West, by Robert Reynolds, won the Harper prize novel contest for 1931-32. To this fact may be ascribed a certain amount of its recent popularity, as it is a notorious habit of the American public to lionize any kind of "champion." But the book itself strikes me as far above the caliber of the average contest-novel.

Reynolds, living now in Connecticut, was born in New Mexico, spent most of his boyhood in Nebraska, studied at Princeton and Lafayette, worked in a Colorado coal mine, and later settled at a silver mine in Northern Mexico. His scene embraces roughly the general region of the great plains and the Rockies, that section of the country in which Reynolds has spent most of his life. There is some vagueness as to the exact location, readily apparent to the reader; but on the other hand an attempt to localize the action would probably be incongruous.

The action covers an undefined period of time—probably forty years or more. In the opening chapters we find war-parties of Indians still roaming the plains of Nebraska and Omaha still without a railway. At the close we learn that there are outposts of civilization everywhere except in the heart of the great range. Yet one must not be misled into believing that Reynolds has written just another story of the "Winning of the West." It is instead what one might describe as a number of incidents taken from the life of two strange giant brothers, David and Charles. Sometimes the

connection between successive incidents is difficult for the reader to grasp, for Reynolds often jumps several without giving any indication that an appreciable amount of time has elapsed. These weak transitions are perhaps the chief traces of amateurishness that one finds.

The plot is adequate yet not obtrusive. The novel is not, I would judge, primarily one of plot, but considering this, there are surprisingly few situations so indefinite as to confuse the reader. The main narrative is essentially complete, and satisfactorily disposes of the principal characters.

Reynolds seems to have proved himself as a master of language. His style is uniformly smooth. His sentences are exquisitely chiseled. There are elements of rare lyrical beauty in the descriptive passages. Fitting in well with this musical, if often melancholy quality, is a fatalistic note that seems perpetually foreshadowing inevitable destruction. This fate is not nearly so capricious as that depicted by Thomas Hardy in *The Return of the Native*, yet is no more to be avoided.

Reynolds paints his characters rather well, in keeping with the general quality of his work. Curiously for an American author, he paints but one truly revolting individual, the Mexican priest. There are other bits of evidence which lead one to believe that the author has no deep sympathy with formal religion. Yet on the other hand there are passages which suggest a reverent feeling of some indefinite variety.

David and Charles, the brothers, are of course the most important characters. Somewhat less important, tending at first to separate the brothers but later serving to draw them more closely together, is Karin, wife of David but loved deeply by both brothers. Around these three was formed a sort of community, built upon the collective strength of the brothers. Several of

these minor characters are interesting, but one must read the book to obtain an adequate appreciation of them.

RAVEN I. McDAVID, JR.

Africa Speaks Again

Coconut Oil. By Corey Ford. New York: Brewer, Warren, and Putnam. 1931. 217 pp. \$2.50.

Being the personal experiences of June Triplett, the demure heroine of *Salt Water Taffy* as she attempts to print the "last word on Africa" *Coconut Oil* is perhaps the most eligible bit of real American satire since Samuel Hoffenstein's *Archie and Mehitabel*.

In these pages, Corey Ford employs those two phases of literary vandalism, the pun and the "wise crack" to excellent advantage accomplishing the lively caricature of twenty or more American heroes. A remarkable example of this is his description of the African Palooka, or punch-drunk kangaroo, and the Who's Hoodoo, or Witches Which, and almost equal in comic perfection is the jungle aviary containing the Commander Bird, the only known bird which has fur instead of feathers.

The purpose of June Triplett's expedition to the Dark Continent is to give a gullible world authentic enlightenment on Africa's great gloomy problem. Assisting her in this noble attempt are her good friends and faithful companions, Chester Drawers and Old Britches, who, she says, must always be near her to insure her comfort.

Perhaps the most gratifying accomplishment of June Triplett's account of her travels is that "every word is as true as the next."

The American public asked for this book by making *Salt Water Taffy* a best-seller. If you miss reading it, you'll be playing unfair to your digestive system. It's a side-splitter.

MARSHALL PRITCHETT.

An Honest Craftsman

The Grasshoppers Come. By David Garnett. New York: Brewer, Warren, and Putnam. 1931. 143 pp. \$2.00.

The Grasshoppers Come, which is another short-novel, a literary form that is becoming rapidly as popular among English and American writers as it has been for some time among the Continental writers, will appeal to only those of fastidious but not necessarily perverted taste. The title, which at first glance is ambiguous and seemingly inane, becomes clear upon reading the work and appears to some degree appropriate, but at least from the standpoint of sales, if for no other reason, such an invidious choice is unfortunate.

David Garnett is an Englishman, still under forty, and comes of parents fairly distinguished in modern English writing. He has a very clear, simple style that combines with the levity of his story to save him frequently from scathing criticism otherwise provoked by his several deficiencies as a writer. Mr. Garnett is not a great writer, and from present indications he never will be. He is, however, an honest craftsman. Whatever his inabilities and weaknesses as a write of prose fiction, he is cognizant of them and stoops to no cheap artifice in order to build around himself a false halo—a trick to which many of our present-day writers owe their transient popularity.

Mr. Garnett has cultivated a flowing, free style, extremely pleasant to read, a style that drugs one into forgetting that one is reading nothing. I cannot recall when I ever before found as much pleasure in reading ten thousand words from which I derived so little benefit.

The Grasshoppers Come concerns an attempted aeroplane flight to break the long-distance record. Two men and a woman make the venture: Lily Beanlands, a wealthy widow who supplies the necessary money

for the project in order to satisfy her middle-aged craving for romance and prominence; Wilmot Shap who encourages the flight as a means of winning Mrs. Beanlands' hand; and Jimmy Wreaks, a one-eyed, scarred veteran of the war, whose mechanical knowledge is necessary but whose social inferiority is recognized and carefully observed by the other two.

This unique trio fly forth from the sunny coast of England and find themselves some forty hours later stranded in the desert wastes "about fifty or one hundred miles north of a line connecting An-hsi-chow and Su-Chow." Jimmy's foot is crushed in the forced landing, so the lovers, without hesitancy and without wasting words in consoling him or even in taking a dramatic farewell, leave Wreaks and soon vanish over the edge of the dry river valley to be heard of no more. Jimmy is left with two sandwiches, an empty thermos bottle, and a little brandy. Of course by the end of the fourth day he is rather hungry and fairly bored with his incessant game of knucklebones. Then the grasshoppers come, and with no consideration whatsoever of what is decent and proper, he does the natural thing—he eats the grasshoppers, raw at first, then fried, and finally, becoming quite fastidious, he makes a delicacy of only the unlaid eggs which he pilfers from the entrails of the unhappy females.

The characterization is only mediocre. The trio are types, not individuals. We never see them as real, living persons; always their figures are only the vague outlines of two men and a woman whose thoughts and lives remain unknown and in whom we have little interest. Mrs. Beanlands is perhaps the nearest to a live person. Occasionally we see her breathe and for a moment sympathize with her; there is something pitifully feminine in her thoughts, in

her speech, and particularly in her reactions to the flight.

By far the best work in the book is the description of the flight. Here Mr. Garnett really wields a magic pen, and from the take-off in England, over the Channel, over Holland, over Germany, over European Russia where we get a vivid glimpse of Moscow and the Kremlin, on over western Siberia, to the dry, parched river valley where the fliers are forced down, we have description that is real, real enough to make us see the beautiful panorama beneath. Unfortunately the author does not maintain this excellence. The rest of the story, which is apparently an effort to depict the psychological processes of a man forsaken in a waste without food and with little hope of deliverance, is weak and unreal. Cruelly enough, we can never really sympathize with Jimmy in his predicament. Of course Mr. Garnett was not attempting to delve deeply into the scientific aspect of the situation—Mr. Garnett never forsakes the simple in either style or subject—but I do believe that he failed to obtain here the effect which he desired.

GEORGE HARWELL.

Scribner Prize Short Novel

Many Thousands Gone. By John Peale Bishop.
12 mo. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
\$2.50.

One hesitates to invoke the cant-ridden term, "psychological study," in connection with such an original piece of work as this Civil War novel, but, unfortunately, no other description seems to fit it. The author's predominant interest here is in the reaction of people to the stress of social upheaval, a theme which he develops through a series of sketches drawn against the background of a Southern town occupied by Northern troops. Although the story possesses nothing which could be called strictly a plot, the action is skillfully employed to show the effect of war on both soldier and civilian.

Few elements of life in the village where the scene is laid are untouched. The antebellum caste system, which withstood the impact of war, is seen in all its nobility and its meanness. From the Southern aristocrat, with his indomitable class consciousness which even poverty and impending defeat cannot break down, to the slave demoralized by unaccustomed freedom, the characters are depicted with keen understanding. They are vital individuals whose responses to the influence of war are as varied as their natures. The troops, their morale shattered by the horrors of battle, sink to disgusting orgies with the slaves, the "first families" withdraw into a frigid aloofness, scorning soldiers and "poor white trash" alike, while the colonel of the invading army satisfies a secret grudge against the town where he was born by burning down the home of his Southern relatives.

Two defects mar the book, but these are rather faults of technique than of conception. The individual sketches are thrown together with a carelessness which makes the total impression confusing, while the abrupt transition from one element of the story to another proves constantly annoying to the reader. In his handling of Negro dialect the author is uniformly disappointing. It is difficult to fancy recently emancipated slaves speaking English which possesses a strange flavor of drawing room preciseness, yet such occurs more than once in the course of the narrative. Even when the darkies speak their own vernacular, it sounds stilted and artificial.

Despite these minor blemishes, however, it is easy for one to understand why this

novel was chosen for the \$5,000 prize offered by *Scribner's*.

EDGAR J. HOCUTT.

"Coöperative Marketing"

The Plight of Cigarette Tobacco. By T. J. Woof-ter, Jr. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1931. 99 pp. \$1.00.

This is a brief but interesting treatment, largely statistical, of the marketing problems of the cigarette tobacco growers, with especial reference to the importance of these problems in the development of coöperative marketing. In the author's opinion, the bad plight of the grower is chiefly due to the monopoly position of the tobacco manufacturer in buying the leaf. He believes that the condition of the grower would be better under a different method of marketing. The tendency of the growers to oversupply the market with only a slight encouragement in price is also pointed out. In view of this one wonders whether the growers can be helped much, as a group, by a marketing system which gives a greater income to most of them. Would not this offer an incentive to expand acreages along both the intensive and extensive margin and still lead to oversupplying the market? It would seem that the growers might be able to help themselves if they would, along with coöperative marketing, work out a better and more stable organization of their farming operations. Marketing is only one of the grower's problems.

The treatment is clear and to the point but seems somewhat jerky in places. On the other hand, this makes the book easy to read and understand.

CHARLES E. LANDON.

NOW EVERY MAN CAN SMOKE A PIPE



NEW
Drinkless
KAYWOODIE

mellows your smoke...
no other pipe does it

Completely different from any other pipe, past or present. New exclusive alloy now cools your smoke, removes harsh "bite." And amplifies the true tobacco flavor. *This great discovery does to your pipe-smoke what the modern refrigerator does to your food.*

Years of work in our own laboratory and tests by a great University made it possible. Beware of imitations, all genuine pipes stamped "Drinkless." Above, No. 46, Ambers bit and Synchronstem \$3.50. Thorn \$4.00.



And for cigarette smokers:
New Tobacco Yello holder

EDITORIAL

(Continued from page 4)

In Patsy Tate, of "poor white" stock, Will finds hope, and with hope comes struggle. This struggle is the motivating element of the play. Will has a whole great tradition to fight, and Paul Green makes this vivid in convincing detail. The fight, at once open and concealed, is bitter; it rises to a violent climax; at the moment of its success, failure threatens. But the break is final, though we leave the theatre wondering if Patsy can solidify the victory.

The play as a whole is exceedingly effective. One portion of the third scene of the first act—in which Patsy and Will dramatically find each other—seems over-done. The audience tittered, and this is death to a serious scene. The Southern accents were perhaps not all they should have been. The cast, however, faced with a difficult play, did well. Mr. Morris Carnovsky, as Uncle Bob, undoubtedly gave the most polished performance. Mr. Franchot Tone, who played the part of Will, Miss Margaret Barker, as Patsy, and Miss Mary Morris, as the mother, showed to advantage.



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Contents

EDITORIAL	3
SUNDAY AFTERNOON (<i>story</i>)	5
By David Cornel DeJong	
SONNETS FROM SORROW (<i>verse</i>)	13
By Mildred Reitsema	
INSURANT (<i>verse</i>)	15
By Tom Carriger	
MIST (<i>verse</i>)	16
By J. B. Clark	
WILLA CATHER: A Critical Essay	17
By Margaret Harrell	
FIELD DAY (<i>essay</i>)	21
By Jack R. Wellwood	
BOOK REVIEWS	25
J. L. Stewart, Thomas J. Shaw, Jr., A. T. West, R. A. Smith.	
THE CONTRIBUTORS	32
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The ARCHIVE

December, 1931

Vol. XLIV

No. 3

EDITORIAL

The fact that a group of intelligent men and women combine in one volume the expressions of their interpretations and appreciations of a single culture, or institution, or locality is significant *per se*. Generally, those things which do evoke, in common expression, the praise of discerning people are in themselves of depth and real beauty. *The Carolina Low-Country*, by members of the Society for the Preservation of Spirituals, recently published by the Macmillan Company, is important for another reason. It is evidence of the persistence of a way of thinking in the South. Since the War between the States the greater part of the artistic talent in the South has been devoted to memorials, commemorations, and eulogies. Only recently has the tendency developed for Southern writers and painters to become interpretative rather than eulogistic. The book *I'll Take My Stand*, by Twelve Southerners, published a year ago, indicated to some extent the trend in this development. That book might be narrowly defined as one of analysis and defense. *The Carolina Low-Country* is fun-

damentally a book of analysis and interpretation, but not without a characteristic modified note of defiance.

There is perhaps no regional culture in America more peculiar, or of more historical and social significance, than this of which *The Carolina Low-Country* is the subject. This statement may not pass unchallenged. But certainly no single distinct section in America has held the sustained devotion and attachment of its natives as has the low-country around Charleston. Apparently the civilization of the low-country is one comprehended only by those born into it. Each generation inherits from the preceding one its manner of life and its manner of thought. It is the men of this civilization who are interpreting and portraying the low-country. It is the characterization of a peculiar culture by distinctive and capable writers and painters.

The first chapter, called *The Low-Country*, written by Herbert Ravenal Sass, is the geographical and spiritual background of the book. It is a work beautifully suggestive of the strangeness, the pathetic sadness, and the lux-

uriousness of the deep moss-hanging forests, the almost tropical splendor of the flowers and gardens, and an atmosphere burdened with the glory of the days that have passed. Mr. Sass concludes his chapter with a summary of the imprint that survives: "A principle—the aristocratic principle of government—an ideal, a manner of living, in short, a civilization which has gone forever has left its imprint here. . . . It survives in both tangible and intangible forms. The old houses are more than houses; they are symbols of all that went into the making of them; symbols of the strength, the courage, the gentleness, the simpleness, the integrity of a time which, in spite of its shadows, was a golden and radiant time. Thus a certain fragrance of human memories and traditions is mingled with the fragrance of the magnolias and the jessamines. There is a sweetness over the land that comes not only from the flowers and the green leaves of the trees."

In a long chapter Alfred Huger has told *The Story of the Low-Country*. He has developed the low-country historically, starting back in June of 1521 when the Red Men first witnessed the strange caravels from the Spanish Island of Hispaniola. In a chapter on *Charleston: The Capital of the Plantations* Thomas R. Waring has outlined the important place that that city has held during the stages in the growth of the American nation.

Perhaps the most substantial chapter in the volume is that by DuBose Heyward on *The Negro in the Low-*

Country. This is a splendid study of the origins, the customs, and the chances for growth and development of this group of the American Negro. It is with something of the same skepticism and reservation that a good many Southerners have held in regard to immediate movements for the liberation and education of the Negro that Mr. Heyward has written of the inevitable political and intellectual independence of the race in America: "We watch him with his family, his unquestioning belief in a personal God, his spontaneous abandonment to emotion, his faith in his simple destiny. And, seeing these things out of our own fuller and sadder knowledge, we wonder whether he will be much happier when the last of the bonds are severed and finally and triumphantly he has conformed to the stereotyped pattern of American success."

* * * * *

In a recent discussion group composed of students from ten of the leading American universities, a thoughtful question was submitted. "Why is it that American students tend to exaggerate perfectly normal situations?" After some argument over the normality of any situation and the degree of exaggerations to which it was likely to be forced, it was decided that students were guilty of overemphasis due to existing circumstances of more or less disadvantageous nature.

Student life in the American university has heretofore received its impetus through the dictated policies

(Continued on page 30)

Sunday Afternoon

By DAVID CORNEL DEJONG

THE lake shuddered a little and the wind went away over the cattails. Then all was still again, a small fierce sun high above him, and a sharp sun on the water, stinging the eyelids. A mallard poised on the angles of three ripples, darkly on a wide sheet which was almost green. And the sun came with tens of colors on his blue coat sleeve. It was warm, it was silent and dully empty and only the dragon flies swung lazily.

He said, "It isn't much good." No, it was not much good. Nor did it seem to matter much. The thoughts rose in the mind and reclined again and again, and only the sun seemed certain. The sky was not there at all if one looked closely, and the land seemed a bland inconsistency of half diluted colors. Fred had not answered. The water bubbled above a sunfish, and later a large turtle slipped away in a dull flash of orange and yellow. He might have been there long, watching with that mute wonder of water animals.

"Are you sleeping again?" Fred shook his head. A small green spider dropped with hesitant leisure down to his cheek. It sprawled awkwardly toward his nose, and when he snorted it rolled on a grassblade, and on, deeper beneath clover leaves. He laughed. There was a dull, hammering pain in his stomach. He laughed louder. A

towhee flew away with three short cries. Fred opened his eyes and looked at him.

"What's funny?" The pupil of his eye was very small, and he laid his arm across his face. He shook his feet impatiently. Paul's laughter silenced and only two rigid pleats remained above his mouth, where the laughter had been. "What was funny?"

"Feeling big." It was an answer. What answer was there ever to lonely laughter. One could not give answer definitely to oneself. Fred would be satisfied with the sound of words. Then he could be silent again. The dull lethargy of his spirit suited the hugeness of the heat and the sun. It was somewhat of an homage from a weak subject to an usurper. They who sit in the heat of the sun shall ponder small things. There were voices on the lake, he heard, men and women's voices, with long silences between. Water spiders slid on the surface water, and from the east came the scent of mint, carried on a brief wind.

"If you mean that I feel big, guess again. I'm just about riding on ants, plantlice and bugs and other vermin. If I weren't so damn lazy I'd get up." Fred was silent again. He spread a handkerchief over his eyes and arranged his body in a straight line.

Then he said, as if it mattered little, "Say Paul, you're not aching about that anymore are you?" The intonation, the mere slitting of the mouth, the unchanged pose, everything told that the question meant little, that an answer was hardly expected. A canoe came in view, and in it were two girls under a parasol. It was a yellow canoe, fiercely yellow on the water, spraying yellow on the dark ripples.

He did not answer. Why affirm him, Fred was right, right in that horizontal pose of the dead, right in his feigned casualness. If he were no longer a Fred of seasons ago, to whom one explained, with whom one went over the minutest matters carefully, because everything had been mutual, what could change it? It was one of those things that had ebbed away, and other things perhaps bigger were here now, but they loomed vaguely, without comfort. That is, nearly everything had been mutual. Now there was the formality of meeting and talking once a week, with too great a haste for small things that mattered. And the larger things seemed hard and distant, like incidents read in an old newspaper. Fred really did not want an answer. It might destroy all this assimilated casualness. If he realized how brief and empty those hours were, there would be no longer this almost friendless shouting as if each were on an island, with sky and sea between. That at least was better than total silence. Perhaps. Even the interference of sun and rain and cold made little difference. The

hour was set off to be spent, almost formally, and the realization that the time, the words in this time were inadequate, only brought muteness, almost rigidity. Still, they must not go without it, even if it were a two hours' standing against a black, moist wall in a stringing autumn rain. But in the end this thing must break, he thought, because the unutterable loneliness at each aftermath brought rigidity to his jaws, and bitterness to his tongue. Yet he knew Fred would be the first to protest. Sometimes he thought that Fred had outgrown this, and he the stronger was in all this as helpless as a forlorn child in a wide plain.

"It's not Ann?" Fred muttered the words sleepily into the long silence.

"No," he blurted somewhat fiercely. "Gosh, go to sleep, I'm waiting for it," he ended dryly. Yes, go to sleep. That morning in a half sleep there had been Ann again, coming through a meadow along a high hedge. She had come with the wind, nearly lost in the sunlight, bringing him something that he must have. He had tried not to look, but each time he looked again she was still in the same spot, walking in that high wind, but coming no closer. Then he looked again after a time, in which there were many colors and much music, but she had not been there and the wind and the hedge had gone, and only the white sky remained on his window, and far beyond it was the crowing of a cock. In the last letter she had said, "Because you are his friend you are *anathema* to mother." That ended it, like a shore-

line suddenly ending in the sea. There had been more paragraphs, delicately worded, but the desperation had ended there, and the letter had ended. *Anathema Maranatha*, if he ever bought a canoe again, that would be the name. If he ever met Harold again he would spit in his face. Such things might atone. He could not be like Christ, suffering for the sins of others. A flame colored canoe came, sliding the name over the water. It should be fit to be drunk in, to capsize it with Dick in it. Of course he would remain, an old Longfellow's clock, ticking on forever. He shook his shoulders. He must stop thinking. In this sun, thoughts came like bites of gnats. He must stop and look at something matter of fact, something people stared at from hotel windows. Fred was excellent, but they must talk. The canoe came closer and the four in it ceased talking, seeing them on the shore. Ann was right, it would bring unending trouble. Her mother's death could be a thing contemplated. Contemplation wearied, and perhaps it was the loss of her that stirred so fiercely. The possession had not seemed to matter so much.

"You don't want to miss the sights do you?" he said suddenly to Fred. The canoe came closer with a small sound of moving water.

Fred sat up drowsily. "Goll, I'll say there's sights. That green one for me. Maybe she looks like the devil though, with that glare in my eyes."

"No, she's a berry. The other one's a little better for use though."

Then they were silent for a space. He knew suddenly that his thoughts had left him. The canoe was almost opposite now. The men gave them a cursory glance and then looked rigidly forward. The girls looked at them, consciously silent.

"How's navigating?" Fred called.

"Tropical. How's beach combing?" It was not the one in green who had answered. The voice was pleasant, though somewhat narrow in the heat.

"Quite paying, right now."

"Yea?" She laughed carefully. The girl in green laughed also.

"Could stand closer inspection though."

"Got my permission. First move's yours." This time it was the one in green. Paul had waited for her to speak.

"Anytime?" he shouted.

"Sure, anytime. The sooner the better."

"What's the number?" Fred had risen because the canoe was gliding away, and he shouted louder.

"Dial 3734. Blanche. That's for both."

"Tune down that bleating of yours. Roll over and go to sleep," one of the men yelled at Fred.

"Keep an eye on your cargo, if you've got any sense," he returned. The canoe was turning the shore bend, and the girls waved once again before they disappeared.

"Class, what say?" Fred sat down again. "Gosh if that isn't worth the afternoon. That green one took a shine to you though. You look safer

I bet. Eyes like pools in snow. This ought to have cheered you up."

"Blanche is yours. Better keep an eye on her and her number."

"Are you telling me? How about tomorrow?"

"That's your night with Helen. Just like all other nights."

"Don't be an ass."

"All right."

"I'll settle that. With Helen too. Tomorrow is all right with you."

"You won't settle that. Not with Helen if I am mentioned."

"Well, is there real need of that? Besides she's considering you more possible of late. More settled or something."

"And ain't that encouraging."

Fred ignored that. "And you are a mean trump when lit. That's what she goes by. And why not?"

"Has it come this far? You're going down of course, but the speed, that's beyond me. Why don't you cut that synthetic moralizing. I may be getting used to the fact of seeing you sink, but drowning today or tomorrow is too much for me. Don't be a prude. The sight of a woman in a bright canoe stirs you like a school kid. And I'd laugh if it wasn't so damn hot." Paul was silent. He kicked a clay clot in the water. "Let's go." He did not care what Fred thought, but he waited for him to rise. A few surly words shouldn't matter much in the surly heat.

Fred rose silently. He followed. They brushed past the willows, through broad palmed mandrakes and reached the path. No words were

spoken. A field sparrow rippled a few very high notes from a shrub oak, and through last year's oak leaves a chipmunk scurried with great noise. Three lean clouds dissolved on the now milky sky, and a high wind shook high branches. A stir quivered from the haws to the ground, where it ceased with a whispered sifting of old leaves and the turning of a jay's feather.

Paul picked the feather up and gave it to Fred. "Pretty," he explained. It lay on Fred's sweat-dusty palm. He looked at it long, and then he folded his fingers over it. It was crumpled. He held it up, ruffled, awry in the bleak sunlight. "It was pretty. Do you want it back. How's that for symbolism?"

Paul took it back. "I'm sorry," he said. He wedged it in the bark of an oak. The blue still shone brightly in the sun. It might be useful to nesting sparrows, for one of their many nestings. It was a little cooler here. Tall oaks and elms arched above them, the path was dark and moist and went through late phlox and wild geraniums. They walked on. He was tired of thinking. He looked at Fred who walked along, patiently and wearily. His anger was gone.

"You are sore."

"Yes, I think I was. I can't decide."

"Be sore at me. It was just a piling up of things on my part. It had to come out. I'll get over it. Give me a cigarette."

"Here." He pocketed the cigarettes again. "This keeping neutral, that gets me too. I knew you had it

on your mind. What am I to do, kick Helen over?"

"No. Don't try to make a problem out of this. Some day we'll set an hour aside to thrash this out. Neither of us can stand half-measures. Besides this business with Anne has me. Getting used to it is hard, but that will remain to the end. It is less hard in fall and winter, that's all. Drinking don't help any. That's only a protective against Helen's bunch, to keep them from swallowing me like they have you. All that culture, culture business. It makes me laugh to see you jammed half-way down their throats. But you're going, partly digested already. And some day I'll come forward with a show of culture that'll make them creep. You know I can."

"Can't we cut this out? Or can't you try to make a truce with her? To tell you the truth she's there to stay as far as I am concerned. And if she can bear me, and you can too, then there must be something in common between you two."

"There is, considering the little there is left of you. As I said before, the romantic warps you. Your head lags so far behind."

"I'd pan anybody else for less than that. What do you know about me? Now listen, we have been friends for five years, haven't we? Shall we have it out? No half-measures you said. All right. Just a sock on the jaw for each of us, and then lets run home and shun each other on the street after that."

Paul faced him. "That's rot. Any-

way remember that date we've got for tomorrow night. Remember you set it. I'd use my own time. But I'd like to see you push that through. That breaking of faithfulness and all that with Helen. I've got a rotten loneliness to drive me."

"Why must you make issues? Why?"

"Shall we quit talking?"

"No." Fred shook his shoulders emphatically. "Even though we go on like a couple of tired hucksters. No. And aren't you seeing Sibyl tonight? You can do me a favor by sailing clear of us tonight. Helen is no proof."

"With a few maneuvers of that kind, I could queer things for you couldn't I? That would be one way of stopping you. Poor, dazed Helen."

"All this won't do you much good."

"I'm not looking for my good."

"Besides you're no match for Sibyl. It's your loss in the end." Fred tugged awkwardly at his tie. "That's what I'm trying to make you see. You're too good for that. In spite of everything."

"For that last statement, I'll try to start a campaign of friendship with Helen." Paul grinned. Fred's statement had been an obituary. A kind word for a dead friend. This had made matters simple, bleak. The rest could be talked about with rote words.

"Are you really going to try? I'll smooth the way for you as much as I can."

"I'll try. Let's talk of something else, anything. Give me another cig-

arette. Thanks. There are about thirty minutes left."

It had all converged to this, finally, with a factual definiteness. Everything was clear now, crystallized, finished. Paul thought. This was the end in which he could actually find rest. All certainty was rest. They were walking together through this hot, sun-vague weather and all this had rolled to an end, an end executed in a few phrases, altogether bland and inadequate in themselves. Within their five years of friendship had come certain climaxes whereupon they were certain that this friendship was permanent, without termination. When Anne had loomed for him, Fred had gone without qualm and had ended that. It had been simple, and he had been nearly gratified, until the complexity of everything had turned him from gratification to painful wondering. Then Helen had come, and perhaps Fred had expected him to act toward her as he had done to Anne, but he had stood aside, watching and marveling, hurt over what he thought was the disintegration of Fred. But it had come, and strangeness at first imperceptible, now was present at all times, until Fred's obtuseness and non-concern had reached such a point that he considered Helen's hatred for Paul as something rather beautifully romantic. Even that had ended. And they went on as strangers, still pacing through a sort of a ritual, which was more an obnoxious habit than a satisfying actuality. Blanche had come, Anne again, and because of these they were biting at each others heels and

still the vague, false ritual went on. Well, it was ended now.

The first houses were there with the remnant of browned lilac blossoms. Some people stirred. A dog meandered lazily along spireas and from open doorways came music. They talked earnestly now. Paul was aware that Fred spoke about an incident in Palieter. Then he told about Casper, who had suddenly decided to marry at South Bend, because the Michigan five day law was too much to be endured by anyone with action. A hundred and six mile drive in a crowded bus, had wilted quite considerably his bride to be, and had slackened his ardor so much, that beyond the confines of the bus, the frequent use of the flask had been needed for further inducement. Then the marriage, necessarily cloudy, and no inn in Bethlehem for the pair, for they had no baggage, and a denouement in a damp rooming house, and a quarrel the day after. Then, the fathers on each side domineering, later repentant, rather lavishly sentimental about the foolishness of modern youth. They laughed over this, with a sort of a hostile mirth. Casper's bride had anemia, but this was reported to be waning. Fred told the story and they laughed uproariously. An old woman scowled at them. There was something desecrating in that laughter on the mute Sunday air. Two girls arm in arm disapproved openly, for it was not the type of laughter one sounded near girls, expectant of male laughter. Fred was marvelous at tales. The minister had courted a new widow,

but the result was not gratifying, for the woman was merely given to grief, not piety. Subsequent congregational prayers had little effect, for the minister's wants had to be clothed so ecclesiastically, that even God must have misunderstood. Fred's mother had understood fully however. The minister was her brother-in-law, Fred's uncle. The mirth had a double flavor, because the minister had once reported a mild drinking party, wherein both Paul and he had participated, to the wrong party, namely Fred's mother, who thereupon had gone into panegyrics about her son's virtues, and had started a campaign to undermine the minister's. The result was gratifying, but the future promised more. They stopped in front of Fred's house. Fred's mother beckoned from behind the window, but Paul shook his head; there was the death of the kitten to be gone over. It gave little delight and even Fred felt miserable. It had swallowed a rabbit tail, and it had died like it had lived, rapidly and suddenly. A fierce little animal, full of life and affection, and above all independent. It made Paul feel miserable, because he had done the burying, behind the garage in the half-darkness of late dusk, with the heavy, sick odors of the heaven trees above it all. They were going to get a Persian in its place. Paul's younger brother had struck up a friendship with a Polish girl, and Paul insisted that this must continue, till the kittens were old enough to be given away. The cat belonged to the girl, who little dreamed that the desire

for a Persian kitten fanned on the interest between her and the boy. Paul knew that after that it would not last much longer. Fred approved of the scheme fully, and urged other tactics to stir up the flagging interest of Paul's brother. They separated. Paul's mouth was tired with laughter. He started to walk more slowly, seeking the shady side of the street. It was five o'clock. The shadows grew fuller and darker, and the wind now rustled in the maples. He started to whistle. Then he ceased again.

Something must be pondered about. Something loomed on the horizon, like a cobalt cloud bank, neither rising nor dissolving, yet faintly ominous. His thoughts came like sudden little showers in June, haphazardly, without compass or direction. He thought of rain on granite, one drop spreading till it could spread no more, till it had returned to pale granite from its former darkness. He thought of small grievances, but they came like the slow trotting of horses behind a hill, not quite real, and vaguely urging toward something more tangible. He had stood before a horse once, a large brown beast, which had gazed with great serenity on a placid stream. When he had looked, the silence had come to him like many birds at flight, calmly in a high wind. The horse had been silence, he had been silence and the stillness of the stream between, had brought an elemental peace, which only came when thoughts ceased. He hated Harold this moment, but hatred was obtuse, and floundered, and had no dignity. As water moved, so

would he move. Still, to give in to a wild disturbance was like the running of horses in meadows, before a boisterous wind. It was like the scudding of cloud shadows along a river bank. Fred dispersed scandals like a chestnut blossoms in June, haphazardly, beautifully, yet savoring of fall. He liked it. The basking in its cruelty was somewhat like the claws of a cat, sheathed in velvet.

Sibyl had a high-legged, black lacquered table, on which stood a grey and serene vase. In it stood one white calla lily, and in it he had dropped cigarette ashes, as a sort of a ritual in defiance, a smoldering defiance, which had neither shape nor evident purpose. He wondered why he had done it, and wondered about his brother, the eldest, who had no guile, only a naïve steadfastness, which was akin to ignorance. He was likeable like a bullock tied under an old apple-tree. Blanche and the one in green were strutting pheasants to that. They were figures walking along a dark street, suddenly visible in a lighted doorway, neither real nor unreal. And with this there came the knowledge of a great heat, which brought tiredness, and dust on the wrists. There was a desire for the green one, which could not be overshadowed by immediate other thoughts. Nor had he the clarity to attempt it. Thoughts would drift on, perhaps to a barnswallow's nest, remembered from a day full of thunder, years ago. The one in green was desirable in a certain tangible way, with a reality which had neither turning nor end. "That tensivity

of yours tears all peripheries away, leaving one with a core which seems almost pathetic when seen in that harsh light, but I refuse to look, I am what I am, periphery and all and don't choose it otherwise, not immediately, for that would make me dependent." Ann had written thus, though the words were his, altogether like old faded words on yellow parchment, from an old pompous age which had moulded. It was perhaps true, as true as any one could ever be about anyone else. And this was with such a rarity of truths that it hurt intensely. Those dahlias in the sun looked thirsty, and dahlias were all periphery, and without it, where would their beauty be? There was a measure of comfort and a measure of sorrow in this. One measure of flour and one measure of oil, that ye may feed the hungry within your gates. He was tired and hungry. There was an odor of codfish from an area way, along which stood roses, nearly all in bud. Some were out and the sun was upon those sharply. Hamilton Street, with closed moonflowers climbing up the green post, while a tattered kite dallied from the telephone wires above.

All would be home. There was a movement, blackly, against the mirror, and books were scattered over the porch chairs. Sons and Lovers rustled pages in the wind, a wind which rocked the green heaviness of the hydrangeas. He stooped to rub the hairy head of Buster, a neighbor's dog, kind and pliable like an old man supported by charity.

(Continued on page 31)

POETRY

Sonnets From Sorrow

By MILDRED REITSEMA

I

I cannot make the songs I used to sing
 Because it stirs old shadows in my heart,
 So I must hide my song lest it should bring
 My sorrow back and tear my peace apart.
 Music was loveliness that made me thrill;
 It brings me only longing now and pain.
 Once Beauty beckoned me from every hill,
 Now desolate I seek for her in vain.
 It was not just a promise that you broke—
 You have made dreams a vanished ecstasy,
 You killed my cherished things with cruel stroke
 For Song and Beauty both have gone from me.

I shall not know again the rapturous Spring
 And you—who loved me so—have done this thing!

II

I do not ask that you should take my hand
 And lead me into every path you go,
 If I could only make you understand
 I love you with a love few men may know.
 As Mona Lisa sat across the room
 There in the shadow of the Campanile
 Looking at Leonardo in the gloom
 Until her smile and his became one smile,
 So I could sit and watch you as the sun,
 Forgetting all my words except your name,
 Until a mystic union made us one,
 Until our spirits blended in one flame.

To be near you I could forego your touch.
 I ask so little—yet it is too much!

III

You will remember how I loved to sit
 There on the doorstep when the moon was lit
 A silver lantern in the cherry tree,
 Singing small songs of muted ecstasy.
 I find I cannot go there any more
 Not since the night you left me at the door
 Turning abruptly with a cold good-night,
 While I stood stricken in the flood of light.
 Then from my quivering lips the harsh sobs leapt
 I flung myself upon the steps and wept,
 In utter agony I bowed my head
 And cried as one who weeps beside her dead.

Those terrible hours of grief I wept alone
 Have made the place a grave, the moon its stone.

IV

They say you are not worth a single tear
 My love is far too great for such as you,
 They count your faults to my unheeding ear,
 I only pity them who never knew.
 If you are wise at all you will not care
 You are well rid of him, they blandly say
 He was so weak, so wavering, so unfair,
 He would have brought you greater grief some day.
 It is a foolish thing for you to cry;
 Forget him and go laughing as before,
 I hold the memory of our love too high
 To bury it that I may smile once more.

I love you so that I would kiss your feet
 If you were blind and begging in the street.

V

"This emptiness is answer if you knew
 To questions never put to me by you."
 These words can only mean that love is done
 They are the ending to the song we sung.
 But you and I can never grow apart
 We are essentially the same at heart.

A miracle once joined our groping hands,
 We stood alone upon eternal sands.
 Our love was like those told in history
 Tristram and Isoult knew our ecstasy,
 We felt like Romeo and Juliet
 The pulse of wonder. Can you hear it yet?

A love as rare as this could never die.
 Beloved, let us wipe away the lie!

Insurant

By TOM CARRIGER

An old warped plank on the ground
 Curling up in the steady rain
 As if wishing to be a boat,
 Or perhaps trying to escape the oozy worms
 Making their Arabic tracings in the
 Soft, plastic mud—the plank above them.

Winter—dry—hard—threatening,
 The stillness of heavy scowling clouds hanging low,
 A little old woman hidden in a shawl
 Bent—a hatchet in her knotty, icy hand,
 Stoops over the plank—feebly hacks—
 Dark splinters fly—the dull, weak chops
 Crumble the wood where it touches the ground.

The blue, shriveled hands have gone,
 Trembling—dropping pieces of the wood
 In their suffering hurry;
 Bare to the eye are the stiffened worm-made markings
 Now clear in a seasoning of snow
 Left by a partial flurry.

Mist

By J. B. CLARK

You lie there in your last sleep—
The undisturbed sleep of peace—
And stricken speechless
I stand here gazing
Into your unseeing eyes.

All is silent—the evening's dusk
Is softly creeping,
Gently settling o'er your bier.
A hazy mistiness of sleep
Pervades the room
And brings a consolation
To my soul, whispering, ever whispering
"No more is Life—this sordid Life—
Rest there in death forever."

The stillness of the tomb is here—
So soothing is the mist—
A moonbeam pours into the room,
Dispels the grave's deep darkness,
And in the garden far away
A bird of night calls to its mate.

Willa Cather

A Critical Essay

By MARGARET HARRELL

THESE is only one word that is applicable to Willa Cather's writing: *simple-complex*. Paradoxical as it seems, therein doubtless lies the charm and appeal of her work, for she possesses the ability to portray with childlike words and directness of thought the most subtle human emotions and complexities of character. She controls the reader's multitude of impressions drawn from his life experiences and directs the few desired emotions by a clear pen dipped in unexpected springs of wealth.

Few authors can stand the double test of leaving a series of enjoyable impressions in the mind of the shallow reader and also of evoking a sense of satisfaction from the critical mind. Surely, no two classes of readers could be more widely separated; and when a writer can satisfy both types, there is, of necessity, genius combined with technical craft. Thus we may say that her writings are *simple-complex* not only for her seemingly artless presentation of character development, but also because of her appeal both to superficial impressions and to analytical thought.

Turning more specifically to impressions, one finds that from the beginning of the works there is no consciousness of reading words which must be translated into thought pic-

tures. Almost immediately the words fuse into lines that shape into a sunset, a portrait, or an every day group such as the old Dutch painters might have brushed into life. There is a peculiar bond drawn between reader and writer here, for, although Miss Cather gives the outline of the impression, it is the reader who draws from his own mental store to supply the detail, the shadows and highlights which make an appreciative inner picture appear. For instance, in the following passage from *My Mortal Enemy* there is no detail, no haggling over minute points of landscape, Myra's expression, or Nellie's impressions—only a few vivid strokes and the reader supplies his own completion to the beautifully suggested painting:

"From a distance I could see her leaning against her tree and looking off to sea, as if she were waiting for something. A few steamers passed below her, and the gulls dipped and darted about the headland, the soft shine of the sun on their wings. The afternoon light, at first wide and watery pale, grew stronger and yellower, and when I went back to Myra it was beating from the west on her cliff as if thrown by a burning glass."

Long after closing any book of Willa Cather's, the pictures remain

impressed on one and especially vivid in color association. Cressida Garet can always be recalled as the singer who wore purple and orchid. Papa Shimurda lives again in his clean white shirt, his dark green necktie and coral pin. The very prairies breathe of color in stark winter, blazing, parched summer, or luxurious autumn and spring. Here is a colorful description which the ordinary unperceptive person would probably have seen as white endless expanse and nothing more.

"The deep arroyo through which Squaw Creek wound was now only a cleft between snow drifts—very blue when one looked down into it. The treetops that had been gold all autumn were dwarfed and twisted, as if they would never have any life in them again. The few little cedars which were so dull and dingy before, now stood out a strong, dusky green. . . . The cornfields got back a little of their color under the dazzling light, and stood the palest possible gold in the sun and snow."

There is none of the blatant, crashing color which Conrad uses in his sea and jungle stories but always there is a richness of tone which "belongs" and which one feels quite as vibrantly as one feels the life of the character themselves.

Appeal to the eye is only one of the rare combinations of sense appeals which one finds all through her work in short, compact sentences. One sees the prairie colors and shapes and at the same time feels the cold of the out-of-doors, all the while sensing the

poignant odors of the plains. Here is a sensibility which all experience but few can communicate in the entire. The authoress has learned the thrill to be gotten from commonplace things and has called forth new meaning for them.

Even to the dabbler or superficial reader comes the sense of having known the people of her books as well as having seen and felt the opulent colors and sense impressions of her undetailed descriptions. Probably the very scarcity of detail makes each speech and action as precious in the person as scarcity of detail in landscape description makes color a necessity. One could never draw a complete picture of Willa Cather's characters just as one never knows every thing about any one, but nevertheless one feels that he has known them and that they have lived and are living now. Mrs. Harling has been living across the street from you for years, and Lena Lingard was in your high school graduating class, talking with her eyes and planning with her practical little head. Sometimes one runs back over conversations and actions several times—just as one returns to actual conversations and actions in life—in order to try to understand the character's motive for doing or saying just what he did. It is not always perfectly clear, but it is always just like the person. One cannot understand why Mrs. Shimurda should berate suddenly Grandfather Burden for "looking like Jesus Christ," but one knows it to be just what she unexpectedly would do.

The impressionist then would get a vivid sensual picturization and a grasp of the life, the action of the characters. The very act of reading is forgotten in the escape to real people and things who are kindred or sympathetically recognized as intensely human.

To the analytical mind, on the other hand, Miss Cather offers similarly pleasing treasures in style, plot development, character development, and use of setting. She is almost faultless in her treatment of these essentials of writing.

In style, that is, craftsmanship with words, she is unexcelled for her use of the simplest language imaginable. The remarkable thing in her simple words, though, is that she can always manage to find one or two which express in unaffected terms what many a writer has taken sentences to depict. The last unnecessary phrase or word has been smoothed away, leaving sentences as direct in structure as in thought. She has mastered apparent artlessness in word use.

Naturally one cannot help noticing how perfectly the directness of style and the forwarding of one line of plot development go hand in hand. There is a unity between the clarity of expression in words and the unfolding of the central theme of her novel. In reality the plot development is stages in the development of the character. There are no digressions or chronicles of deeds which veer from disclosing the living qualities of the characters. Not one incident in the *Lost Lady* is irrelevant to the principal effort to show a woman totally out of

her desired world and unable to attain the peak of Life—self-fulfillment. Not one character is introduced which does not heighten either the revelation of the Lost Lady's character or of her tragic maladjustment to environment.

The development of character in Miss Cather's novels is a peculiarly subtle accomplishment. She does not force the reader to reconstruct minutely either appearance or mannerisms as Dickens does, but rather she relies on the reader to complete and supply the rounding out of her personalities. This suggestive quality of her depiction is of primary importance, for it helps the reader and author to combine their impressions instead of conflicting them. A certain life is put into characters also by this reliance on the reader, for he then keeps vibrant and sustained the action which Willa Cather has started. In *My Ántonia* one notices how strikingly incidents of her own life are woven into the characters of the book, making them live anew in novel form. If the author may re-live her life in her works, how much more understandingly may a character be portrayed if the reader inserts his kindred experiences along with the author. This blending of the unfolding character, authoress, and writer is one of Miss Cather's outstanding literary traits.

Such a blending quality is used also in the development of character and setting. There is no separate learning the details of where the story is laid and then meeting the people involved. Both the character of the lo-

cation and the character of the personalities are revealed together. This trait is most beautifully exemplified in *Shadow on the Rocks*, in the first fifty pages of which one simply *knows* the relation of the setting to the characters and the characters to the setting. No words nor unity of the whole work is lost in considering first one factor and then the other, but instead they are fused and after the first strokes of outline grow together in the reader's comprehension. In *My Mortal Enemy* there are several splendid passages showing the blending of the character's moods with the setting, making each indispensable to the other. Just one will illustrate the point.

"The snow fell lightly all afternoon, and friendly old men with brooms kept sweeping the paths—very ready to talk to a girl from the country, and to brush off benches so that she could sit down. The trees and shrubbery seemed well groomed and sociable, like pleasant people. The snow lay in clinging folds on the bushes, and outlined every twig of every tree—a line of white upon a line of black. Madison Square Garden, new and spacious then, looked to me so light and fanciful. . . . I lingered long by the intermittent fountain. Its rhythmical splash was like the voice of the place. It rose and fell taking deep, happy breaths; and the sound was musical, seemed to come from the throat of

spring. . . . Here I felt, winter brought no desolation; it was tamed like a polar bear led on a leash by a beautiful lady."

Like a kaleidoscope, the more one looks into Willa Cather's work, the more one can see of newness, design, and variety. To be sure, she is not perfect. Often her figures seem too alive to be able to endure so much vitality and personality. There are no commonplace moments, and this makes a similar impression as some of Hardy's works: that the whole has been carefully weeded and sifted to suit her own plans. Her message is usually the same—that of the struggle of humanity to realize its dreams of self. Many times one wishes hurriedly that she would insert either more of herself or of her conception in direct delineation.

The qualities of her work are sterling, possessed of worth that will make her be remembered long after many other modern writers have vanished. Her position may, I think, be best compared to her own description of the evening star:

"Higher up, in the clarity of the western slope, the evening star hung like a lamp suspended by silver chains—like the lamp engraved upon the title-page of old Latin texts which is always appearing in new heavens, and waking new desires in men."

Field Day

By JACK R. WELLWOOD

THE annual field day exercises held by the Third Higher Normal College in the city of Shirojima, Japan, was for the majority of people living in the city a far greater occasion than the graduation day program of the same institution. The Japanese are accustomed to school ceremonies, for strict observance of all the official holidays of the country is one of the requirements of government schools there, but the autumn field day exercises of the Normal College were held but once yearly. The several other colleges in the city also held their own days of sports, it is true, but none were so important in the eyes of the people as the event given by this school. With the exception of the original Higher Normal College in Tokyo, which, as the capital of the nation, was automatically credited as the home of all Japanese institutions, there were but two similar schools in the country. Shirojima was honored by having one of these two, and its inhabitants were proud of it.

The event had been widely heralded. Many families had sons in one of the many departments of the institution. Mothers faced the forthcoming day with hidden misgivings, for it was a day of severe testing of the qualities of valor and manhood in the youths, and their sons' fates lay in the

showing they made. The possibility of disgrace was not minimized, and the only redemption from disgrace was a stern one, exacted by a society long educated to uphold tradition over individualism. Fathers too had their moments of apprehension, but with the average masculine complacency and optimism, they showed an outward pride, not altogether false, that their sons would uphold the noble traditions handed down in their families through the generations.

For days, carpenters had been hard at work on the large athletic field; enclosing it in a series of barracks which, on the day of competition was entirely hidden from outside view. Attached to the outside upright poles which supported a hastily built roof, were long strips of cheap cotton cloth with the familiar holiday colors of blue and white printed in wide bands, with an occasional school crest signifying a section in which were to sit special guests of the institution. The tiers of stone seats which were permanent fixtures on two sides of the field were also divided into small booths, and it was on these seats that the President of the college arrived in quiet dignity, while other institutional heads and wealthy patrons grouped themselves around him. The other guests had straw mats upon which they seated themselves, but this

was cheerfully accepted: it was the custom.

And so, by the morning of the eventful day, all was in readiness, and the streets surrounding the school ground were crowded as early as eight o'clock. Families with numerous small children, some strapped to their mothers' backs, others in gaudy and creaking baby carriages, all with running, dirty noses, filed through the entrance gates in good natured haste. School boys of other institutions came in self-conscious loudness, laughing raucously at things not in the least amusing, but a little out of the ordinary. Principals and teachers of smaller schools, dressed in well worn cut-away coats and stiff formal collars, already in need of a good washing, passed through the gates in very humble and polite manner, while more school children, organized into ill formed lines, jostled in their rear. Close behind them came groups of school girls, in drab blue uniforms, twittering inanely to each other, and gazing rapturously at the sights within. All passed through, and after some time got to their appointed seats just before the exercises were under way.

At eight thirty, to the tunes of a feeble band, the whole student body of the college, its associated kindergarten, primary, and high school marched into the field, and after some delay organized in straight lines. In the eastern corner of the grounds, the physical director of the institution climbed onto a wooden platform and then assisted the President of the col-

lege to his side. Now the whole field was perfectly quiet. All rose and turned to the east, in which direction lay Tokyo, the center of the land of the Rising Sun. This was the time honored procedure, yet every man and woman rose erect, in complete self-forgetfulness, and with bared heads, to respond to the signal and salute their great nation to whom they all owed their best efforts, their adoration, if necessary their death. They did not wait long. In a strained voice, the President uttered the sacred words, *Ten no Heika, Banzai, Banzai, Banzai!*¹ And the masses responded, *Banzai, Banzai, Banzai!* After similar cries given to the institution, and the head of the institution, the school children began to sing the field day song, common to all Japanese schools:

Machi ni machitaru Undōkai,
Kitareri.²

The contests soon began. At first the regulation field and track events held the attention of the crowd, but due to the many heats necessary, each event took much time, and the spectators grew restless. It was at this time that the Higher Normal College differed from other schools in their program. After each race, the victor was most politely escorted to the booth of the President. Here, he bowed low, received a small token of victory, which he humbly accepted with both hands, then bowing low again, he returned to his fellow companions among whom he could enjoy a moment

¹ Ruler of Heaven, (the Emperor) hurrah, hurrah, hurrah.

² The eagerly awaited field day has arrived.

of superiority. The applause which greeted this ceremony was much greater than that given just at the close of the event. The recognition given to the winner was more greatly prized by the audience than the win itself. For in the recognition, the school boy was placed for a short time on an equality with the great.

But still the interest waned. Again, to revive the attention of the spectators, the university provided one booth, run by students with some ingenuity, from which mimeographed sheets, with caricatures of the winners of the latest races together with some appropriate comment on the race itself, were thrown to the people in each of the booths, by several students. These considered it their duty to run at top speed around the track, crying loudly, and jingling small bells which were tied to their belt straps. To the small children, these extras were an unfailing source of interest, not because they could read, or even enjoy the pictures done in the coarse black ink, but the lure of the jingling bells was strong, and some twenty or thirty of them would run pell mell after the carriers, sometimes falling, sometimes holding the boys' swift pace for a few seconds, always clamoring for a copy of the paper, which they wished to receive, as it were, first hand.

So far the various events themselves were entirely western in aspect. It was only by watching the spectators that the peculiarities, the gaity, the grit, and the glamor of the east made itself apparent. But around noon, the western events were put aside. At

last the truly Japanese games, with their necessity for a certain indomitable spirit to be victorious, came into prominence.

The field was magically cleared. In a straight line running across the center were placed some ten straw bags about two feet long, and one foot in diameter. At opposite ends of the field fifty men paced impatiently, dressed in loose, coarse robes, used in the official jiu-jitsu matches. The object of the event was for one side to bring a majority of the straw bales to their side of the field. Until the sixth bale had crossed one of the lines, none of them were free from molestation by the opposite group, but each had to be carefully guarded from calculated theft.

With the onlookers once more hushed, a pistol shot announced the beginning of the game. Immediately, the hundred men became a swarming mass in the middle of the field where they struggled in savage ferocity to drag the valueless bales across their boundary line. No slugging was allowed; slugging is a western development, but all the hideous holds of modern wrestling, many of which have been barred in competition in America were used to best advantage. But there was no giving in. From time to time, hoarse cries of *Nippon-yuki*³ and *Ware wa Nippon Danshi*,⁴ were emitted in fierce sobs. Gradually one side obtained the advantage, and the majority of the bales, began to move irregularly towards one goal

³ Japanese valor.

⁴ As for me, I am a youth of Japan.

line. The audience watched with surprising calm; not that they were uninterested, for the event was the most popular one of the day, but their culture forbade them from making any indecent display of emotion: they were a race of men.

The struggle ended as suddenly as it began. The last defense of the losers crumbled in a flash, and the victorious team formed in a tattered group to march in proud if battered step to receive their reward. In this case, the prize was a large banner which was borne in stolid pride by the captain of the winners. Now it was over. Children once more began to wail, and their complacent mothers took the one common measure of quieting them by suckling their offsprings, whether babes in arms, or boisterous men of five years.

There followed in quick succession many similar events, during which both spectators and players went through similar actions, similar expressions, similar silences. With the fourth game under way it seemed to the outsider that the whole thing was becoming a farce; the students were but puppets going through a formula, the spectators were but following their traditions; yet the same intensity was observed.

With the conclusion of the last of this series came an hour's intermission during which time all ate their lunches. The crowd scattered. Many left the grounds to eat and drink in neighboring restaurants, from which some proud fathers found it impossible to draw themselves away, and were car-

ried home in drunken stupors late in the evening.

The afternoon's entertainment was enjoyed only by the women. The girls of the High School department went through several series of dances, most of which were western in aspect, accompanied by sentimental tunes. There was but one return to the strenuous exercises of the morning. This was the annual cross country race in which only the most stalwart students were allowed to compete. Some thirty boys circled the large field three times before they followed the difficult course leading them far beyond the city limits.

After forty minutes the audience became tense. Soon, from the western entrance to the field two students on bicycles rode slowly in, and at their rear straggled the winners of the contest. Their pace was slow now, and the absolute lack of training caused by their heavy rice eating was telling on them. Circling the field for the final time before reaching the barrier, the leading runner collapsed. It was incredible that in the entire audience there should be so little sympathy. But little was given. The man had failed in his race, his opportunity, his duty. He was not to be pitied; he was more to be scorned. By this time, the second runner had crossed the tape, and valiantly tried to walk upright to the president's booth, where he humbly received his award, walked away, and then fell down. For him, there was nothing but praise. He had done his duty. He had been able to

(Continued on page 31)

BOOK REVIEWS

The Awful Truth

Dawn. By Theodore Dreiser. New York: Horace Liveright, Inc. 589 pp. \$5.00.

Since the appearance of *Sister Carrie* in 1900, criticism, both favorable and adverse, has raged constantly over Theodore Dreiser. For many years the author was charged with absolute immorality in his novels, and while today even the most conservative of critics scarcely dare voice this opinion, Mr. Dreiser is regarded in upright and moral communities as a "dirty" writer.

Thoughtful criticism at the present time, however, is divided into two groups. On the one hand, we find those who grant the man sincerity, but state that sincerity alone is not sufficient to place a writer among the rank of great artists. And since Mr. Dreiser is overwhelmingly addicted to wordiness, and a general inability to express himself either concisely or beautifully, he cannot be classed as a first-rate literary figure. The opposing group grants this wordiness and technical messiness, but holds that in Theodore Dreiser's honest efforts to present the truth, unimpeded by any sense of duty towards conventionalisms, the author must be granted the leading position among contemporary American writers.

The publication of *Dawn*, the second volume in the proposed history of his life, will do little to settle this controversy. All his faults of expression are as prevalent in *Dawn* as they were in *The Titan and The "Genius."* One of the most informing parts of the book to me was his opening paragraph. Here he states:

"The average earthling, as I have reason to know, has frequently the greatest hesitation in revealing the net of flesh and emotion and human relationship into which he was

born and which conditioned his early efforts at living and too often his subsequent place in life and society. I am free to say here and now that I am in no way troubled by any such thoughts or feelings. In the recital that is about to follow, I think it will be obvious that I am moved only by motives of analysis which are as honest and sympathetic as I hope to make them revealing."

In the first sentence, Mr. Dreiser is clumsy in expression and entirely too wordy. But in the remainder of the paragraph, he clearly states his reason for writing the book, and the attitude which he takes towards this writing.

Dawn may aid in the understanding of Theodore Dreiser himself; for it certainly stamps him as an eccentric figure, but his morbidness will prove incomprehensible to many. I am personally convinced that Dreiser is a great writer. *Dawn* is undoubtedly one of the most amazing biographies ever written, but although it clearly shows the author's struggle to record the truth, it is not as fine a work as *Jennie Gerhardt* or as *An American Tragedy*.

J. L. STEWART.

Sliced Peaches in Cream

Sand in My Shoes. By Katharine Ball Ripley. New York: Brewer, Warren and Putnam. 332 pp. \$3.00.

Ten years ago a young husband and wife bought a farm near Samarcand, North Carolina, in the Sandhills country. They built a house, planted thirty acres in peaches, and prepared themselves to make eventually, as they thought, an income of from five to ten thousand dollars or more per year. Eight years later when they were through with the experience their orchard was still on their

hands, for sale at twenty cents on the dollar. *Sand in My Shoes* is Mrs. Ripley's story of the day by day events she and her husband, Clements Ripley, the author, lived through as they tended to those peach trees and marketed their uncertain yield.

When the Ripleys first settled at Samarcand the Sandhills peach "boom" was just at its prime. The trees bore abundantly, or rather their neighbors' trees did, for they had to wait four years before their own young shoots came in. But all about them "people were doing it" and making money. In the meantime, as Mrs. Ripley tells, she and her husband endeavored to make the farm pay by raising honeydews and water melons. They hired a foreman-farmer, a good-natured man named Sanders; they went to parties given by other peach growers who were like themselves new-comers; but the honeydew crop failed and the melons would not sell. When the peach trees did begin to bear new hope came, but not for long. Out of the three bearing seasons only once did the orchard at Samarcand show enough profit to cover expenses of production. Overproduction, competition from Georgia, poor marketing facilities, bugs and worms, even the very elements of Nature, snow, cold, rain and heat worked against the orchard.

The bare recital of failure after failure forms, nevertheless, nothing but an outline of *Sand in My Shoes*. The real force of Mrs. Ripley's narrative shows itself in her detached yet close feeling for the people of the Sandhills, whether they were her equals, the growers, or her helpers, the white tenants and negroes. She gives us more than a pale reflection of the life and death, hope and fear, joy and sorrow, and kindly humor of the gentry and the workers who labored with her in the sand country. And she touches their practical experiences and diverse characters with an intuitive simplicity. A sense

of the color of words is joined to an appreciation of dramatic values plus an understanding of the proper uses inherent in undertones. Out of the life around us, seen, perhaps, but rarely felt by the average city dweller, Mrs. Ripley has written this book. In it she has caught for a moment the low whisperings and the sometimes deeper tones of voices close to the soil.

Readers looking for a good non-fiction book with more than a passing spirit of adventure should like Mrs. Ripley's book.

THOMAS J. SHAW, JR.

Cries of Anguish

Unrest—1931. A collection of revolutionary verse edited by Jack Conroy and Ralph Cheney. New York: Henry Harrison. 112 pp. \$1.75.

When a reviewer opens a new book he is committing himself to two tasks: the first is to pass judgment upon the literary qualities of the volume, its style, its artistic values; the second an attempt to weigh the value of the thought contained therein, and to discover what contribution it offers to the sum total of human knowledge. *Unrest—1931* is a collection of what is considered best in revolutionary poetry, gleaned from everywhere. To judge it by the usual standards of poetic excellence seems to me ironical. These pieces are not the perfectly polished efforts of calm, reflective minds in praise of beauty and universal truth; they are not lyrics of love or passionate odes of praise. They are the cries of anguish, the hymns of hate uttered in moments of despair by human beings trapped, and valiantly beating their heads against the unyielding walls of conservatism and smug complacency. They are the echoes of the unrest which exists in the human breast to-day. Who dares look for sweetness and light, for contemplation, for the prettily turned word and figure here? It would be as fitting to search for the glimmer of polished steel in a seething crucible of

molten ore. Here the cause supersedes the medium of expression.

Yet, from time to time, one senses the beauty of strength, one admires the virility of expression and is frequently aware of the poignant beauty of sheer ugliness—the ugliness of life somehow caught for a moment in a line or phrase. These are no sweet warblings of the nightingale or mockingbird from some “bosky bower,” but the ominous croakings of the raven; these are not the trillings of “some lark in azure blue, sunward blown,” but the screams of eagles high in the sunlight, piercing the blanket of smoke and soot which hangs like a pall over the squalid habitations of those who work in order that the few may enjoy the sun.

The charge that the volume is sheer “propaganda” need not be answered. The editors admit it, so will any intelligent reader, yet as such it deserves careful consideration. These verses, representing the universal spirit of unrest, either foretell the doom of the present social order, or point the way to a greater understanding among men. With even a casual glance one sees about him conditions that cry out for redress. In this collection these inarticulate cries become articulate. The worker cries out for understanding and the right to live; the prisoner at the bar cries out for justice; the negro cries for a chance to walk erect, the numberless war-dead cry for peace, and some champion to avenge their useless sacrifice.

Unrest—1931 deserves the consideration not only of those who champion the cause of man, but of those who by their ignorance, lack of interest or inertia contribute to the conditions herein revealed.

A. T. WEST.

Ireland in Revolt

Guests of the Nation. By Frank O'Connor. New York: The MacMillan Co. 278 pp. \$2.00.

Guests of the Nation marks the appear-



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ance of a new Irish writer, who tells of his native country sensitively and with understanding. Frank O'Connor, in his first volume, has written eight sketches, brilliant and complete in themselves, but carefully woven together by a central theme, giving the work a definite identity.

In *Guests of the Nation*, the Irish Rebellion, a bit of obscure and presumably uninteresting civil strife taking place just after the World War, is resurrected in a blaze of fervid color, in its disorder and enthusiasm an echo of the American Revolution.

Mr. O'Connor has, in style, learned much from the contemporary Irish writers. In his first work he has shown a complete disdain of the flowery or pedantic, which would be out of place in his narratives living by virtue of their unassuming simplicity. But with his simplicity in style, the author does not become placid. The pathos, irony, and savage mirth of a nation thrust into the frenzy of internal strife is recorded vividly and with strong dramatic insight.

To make the book still easier to read and enjoy, Mr. O'Connor has been careful to make strong contrasts between each of his sketches. As a new author he is evidently proud of his ability to shift from exhilaration to depression, and from satire to naiveté. These contrasts are somewhat obvious, and thus, I believe, tend to lessen the sincerity and adherence to truth which are displayed elsewhere in the book.

The author is to be congratulated for *Guests of the Nation*. Although his labored workmanship is visible in certain places, yet he is never pompous. He has told his story of Ireland's efforts to adjust herself in a vivid manner.

R. A. SMITH.

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The Inevitable Choice

The Cabin In the Cotton. By Harry Harrison Kroll. New York: Ray Long & Richard R. Smith. 289 pp. \$2.00.

The Cabin In the Cotton is a novel dealing with the present southern scene, specifically the cotton plantations in Mississippi. The author traces the struggle of one Danny Morgan, born of poor white renters, and befriended by a rich planter, to adjust himself between the two factions.

The theme of the book is thus an important one. It is, I believe, far too important to be dealt with conclusively within three hundred pages. But perhaps, I am misinterpreting the author's purpose in writing the book. Perhaps he has endeavored merely to write a swift moving romance. If so, he has succeeded well, for the plot in which young Morgan leaves his family and associates to live for a time in the house of the

rich, only to become disillusioned and return home, makes a first class romance. But between the exposition of the plot, I read the presentation of a problem, the problem of the relationship between planter and renter.

The planter's side of the problem is clearly to be seen: too clearly, we fear, for Danny Morgan. In his position as mediator between the two groups, he understands the lack of sympathy that the planters have for the sordid renters. He realizes that they are risking much in renting their land to incompetent and often times dishonest farmers.

Harry Harrison Kroll avoids the solution of the problem to conclude his work in a burst of melodrama. The planter's daughter spurns Morgan; when the irate planter has several of his renters jailed for arson, he forces a compromise by threatening to expose the illegal system of bookkeeping which his employer has used; and so, a sadder and a wiser man, he returns to his hovel to marry one of the poor whites.

Within this fairly conventional denouement, Mr. Kroll has recorded one important scene. Exasperated by the ribald taunts of his father and brother, Danny leaves his home in a burst of anger. Just as he walks away, his younger sister and mother tearfully try to hold him back. At first he had left his home in bitterness, now he goes resolved to rise in the world, to educate his sister, then finally to return and provide a decent existence for his whole family. Here the author has recorded intensity of feeling to produce a piece of genuine writing.

The Cabin In the Cotton should prove to be a popular book. Mr. Kroll has written his story in a racy manner and crammed it with action. He cannot be credited with facing the social problem which he has presented faithfully or conclusively. Yet the book admits the unsatisfactory conditions; it now remains for a man of vision to solve them.

J. L. STEWART.

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EDITORIAL

(Continued from page 4)

of trustees and administrators, and since the youth of America has not yet proved itself exceptionally revolutionary, one may surmise that the responsibility of future American culture lies in the hands of these dictators. Such a situation seems hardly ideal. The suggestion that America's apparent greed for money is blighting culture may or may not be applicable. It must be admitted, however, that professional departments of the universities have so encouraged an atmosphere of practical routine that classic culture is no longer to be absorbed.

The student takes his academic work seriously, but with the feeling that he must pass through a certain equipment machine before he hurries out into life to make a niche for himself. There is perhaps as great a desire for general learning as there has been at any time in the world, yet the realization of the necessity of exhaustive knowledge concerning a single subject or relative ones forces the intelligent student into solitary pursuit of the material which will eventually make him independent. A halt has been called on the progress of the arts. Mercenary America does not smile on the arts unless the artist is particularly clever at deception. People like to be deceived so that they may say to themselves, "We shall never be caught in this trap again." And the genius devises another trap and makes another catch. If culture must be realized through trickery it will perhaps

eventually become a stabilized attainment, but the process will be too gradual and the opposition may be too strong.

The student is half-aware of his predicament. He realizes that the best conditions are not being offered him, yet he too realizes that his will not be a very substantial livelihood if he poses as a dilettante. As an outlet for his suppressed emotions he welcomes an opportunity to exhibit undue loyalty, to make a hero of a fellow student, to accept radical ideas without proper consideration. But the question when considered in that light becomes purely psychological.

It must be admitted that attitude toward sex has done more to whip American Youth into the limelight of popular disfavor than any other one thing. Perhaps it has become too enthusiastic about the so-called new freedom. But there are fewer hypocrites today among the rising generation than half a century ago. Morals are governed by a different standard. It has been fashionable for a decade for latent Victorians to air their moral prejudices in the face of progress, and the reaction has stimulated a concentrated revolt which will, of course, continue somewhat devastating until it has readjusted itself.

Religious revolt may be explained somewhat in the same manner though it will never be adjusted. Ritual enters the discussion at this point, and when man finds it necessary to explain mysterious faith by acting other mysteries, how much nearer the truth is he?

One may accuse the American student of exaggerating certain situations, but is it not better to strive for enlightenment than to accept without questioning its validity that which the past has willed them?

SUNDAY AFTERNOON

(Continued from page 12)

There was not much speech, only a half hearted Sunday chatter came from the kitchen, concerning walnuts and whipped cream. Father said, "So." He answered, "Yes." Nothing more was needed. There was no mutual inquisitiveness between them, only a taking for granted. No words, only inflections. At the sight of chairs he was very tired.

To Sibyl over the telephone, he said, "No rather not tonight," and "No the heat is not congenial," and "You are right as usual, but I choose to consider you wrong," and then, "No, likely tomorrow perhaps." There was more, negatives and goodbyes, evasions and last goodbyes. He picked dried leaves from the Wandering Jew, thoughtlessly. Later Fred telephoned. There would be no stepping out with Blanche and the green one. He acquiesced methodically. This ended the afternoon's upheaval. By this time dusk blurred outlines under chestnuts and his tiredness was over. And later he lay on his back in the grass, looking at a sky with the beginning of stars. Nighthawks were making last

loud swoops, and the grassblades were cold with dew. He shivered a little.

FIELD DAY

(Continued from page 24)

continue to the end and receive his token of victory. His collapse was regarded not harshly but sentimentally, for many people continued to ask about him, until he was reported to be doing well.

It was now late in the afternoon. With the close of the last event, the student body again filed into the field and arranged themselves into the ranks which they had held that morning. Again the President of the school climbed the platform in the eastern corner of the field. The concluding exercises were more impressive than the opening ones. All the students, most of them weary and dirty, magically straightened themselves when their leader began to speak. He commended their efforts, and once more led the impressive cheer for the Ruler of the nation. Nor did the spectators move until this ceremony was over. They too stood erect and silently paid their sincere respects to their Emperor.

While the school children sang their concluding song, however, the visitors made their exits, and with little commotion and no display of feelings, they slowly returned to their homes to contemplate the greatness of their nation, the valor of their youths, and the nobility of their Emperor.

The Contributors

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Contents

THE HELL-BOUND VESSEL (<i>story</i>).....	3
By P. Burwell Rogers	
THE AMERICAN SMALL TOWN: A BRIEF SKETCH.....	8
By Ima Honaker Herron	
REMEMBRANCE (<i>verse</i>)	16
By Clover Holly	
PORTENT (<i>verse</i>)	16
By Alton Hurst	
THE FOX AND THE LION (<i>verse</i>).....	17
By Newman I. White	
EXAMINATION GRADES (<i>verse</i>).....	18
By Newman I. White	
FIVE O'CLOCK TEA (<i>play</i>).....	19
By Kathleen Holloway	
BOOK REVIEWS	25
F. K. Mitchell, Thomas J. Shaw, Jay B. Hubbell, Charles E. Landon, J. B. Clark, J. L. Stewart, Ima Honaker Herron	



“Marthy took her last look at the village”

—HELL-BOUND VESSEL
By P. Burwell Rogers

The ARCHIVE

January, 1932

Vol. XLIV

No. 4

The Hell-Bound Vessel

By P. BURWELL ROGERS

(The location of Chincoteague Island is described so that one may locate it on a map. The entire story is based on fact and all the characters are living people to the author. The dialect may seem a little inconsistent, but he has tried to reproduce it as faithfully as possible. Barring a few peculiar pronunciations and local expressions, the chief feature of the speech of these people is that it is just as bad English as it can possibly be. Of course some of the younger people use better language today, but, since this story is laid in the middle of the last century, the speech of the older, and possibly more typical, people is the one used.)

AS the *Mary Watson* moved down the harbor under full sail Marthy was on board. She stood at the stern for some time waving to her mother on the dock. But there were other things to attract her attention. She always liked to see the island from the bay. It didn't seem to be the place she knew when she was on land. The shore, lined with its long row of little white houses, which seemed even whiter in the afternoon sunshine, made a pretty picture. Most of the houses on the island were close to the water's edge. In fact, a number of people moored their boats to their own back door-steps. Far behind the houses rose the tall pine trees which grew around the glades in the middle of the island. These were the

only growing things on the place. The tide comes over the land every three or four years, leaving the earth so salty that the growth of vegetation is almost impossible.

When the boat turned into the inlet below the island Marthy took her last look at the village. She knew that she would soon be out in the ocean and then the land would be only a thick bluish line separating the sky from the water.

The voyage was uneventful as far as the captain and crew were concerned. The weather was fair—very fair for February—and the sea calm. As for Marthy, she never had a more thrilling time in her life. This was her first real sea-voyage and her first

visit to the city. She was in her seventh heaven of delight.

When Cap'm Jim Watson docked his schooner in Philadelphia it was not long before another boat, the *Elsie*, from the island came into the harbor. Her captain, seeing a home-port vessel, tied his boat along side of Cap'm Jim's *Mary Watson*. After the cargo had been unloaded Jim took Marthy up the street several times to look in the store windows. They even went in some of the shops and bought a "store dress" for her and some little presents for her mother and brother. Cap'm Jim also purchased a quantity of food-stuffs and a number of odds and ends for use on the boat. When all these things were on board and the crew had had time to drink their fill and get over it a bit, Jim gave orders to start for home. The *Elsie* was about ready to leave too. As the crews were getting their ships into shape the two captains were talking across the rails.

"Cap'm Jim", said Cap'm Sam Mears of the *Elsie*, "I'm a-takin' my A'nt Idy down ter the islant with me. I jes' brung her aboard yershdy (yesterday). Seeing that she'll be the only woman on board I guess she might git lonesome-like. Too bad there hain't no other woman folks fer ter keep her comp'ny. But hit won't be long a-goin' down noway."

"That hit will be lonesome fer her", responded Jim. "A woman on a boat like yourn is allus lonesome 'cause the men-folk don' have no time fer ter give 'em."

"Ye air right there", answered

Sam. "A woman on a boat is in the way of the men nohow."

"I tell ye, Cap'm Sam, let's git Marthy fer ter go on yer boat fer ter keep yer a'nt comp'ny", suggested Jim. "She's only a kid, but she's a gal and she can be good compn'y fer her. She is mischeevous, but she's easy fer ter git acquainted with. She won't give ye no trouble. She won't be no never mind ter ye. Ye won't even know ye got her aboard."

"That's a good idee, Jim," said Cap'm Sam. "Ye sure ye don' mind her a-goin' down with me?"

"Shore, she'll be as well took care of on yer vessel as she'd be on mine. Hey, ye Marthy! Git yer things ter-gither! Ye air a-gonna go down home on the *Elsie*!"

Marthy wondered what her father was talking about. She had no idea of leaving him. To go home on another boat did not please her at all. The best part of the voyage was just being with her father. But Jim explained things to her and although she still did not want to go on the *Elsie*, she knew that it would never do to oppose him. So the child sullenly packed her few belongings and crawled slowly over the rails to the other boat.

Miss Ida Mears, although about sixty-five years old, was pleased with the child and the two immediately became quite friendly. Soon the old lady had Marthy telling all about the wonderful things that her pa had shown her in the city. In an effort to interest her kindly patient listener, she even pulled out her new "store dress" to

show. It was her first dress from the city and in the eyes of the child it was beautiful. To be frank, it was a hideous brown with white flecks in it and was cut on the plainest pattern made for a child's dress in the middle of the last century. Even at that it was by far more attractive than any clothes Mary Watson had time to make for her children.

In the meantime the captains continued to talk.

"I'll tell ye, Cap'm Sam," said Jim, "this here vessel is the fastest' one from the islant. There hain't no other from Pluncotock w'at can beat her."

"Now, Jim," replied Sam, "ye may say all ye like about yer *Mary Watson*, but I allus says that my *Elsie* werz (was) jes' as good a boat as yours or any other."

This line of conversation kept up for some time and finally drew near an end when the boats were ready to pull out.

"Sam", said Cap'm Jim, "tell ye w'at I'll do. I'll bet ye that this here vessel hits ter Chincoteague Islant afore yourn derz (does), an' I'll bet ye a gallon of the bes' liquor w'at Ole Man Iry Bunting's done got in his place on it."

"All right, suh!" Cap'm Sam answered quickly, "I'll take ye up on that one. Man, I'll see this here boat of mine in Hell afore I'll let her be beat by any lousy tub like yourn! That I will!"

"That's a go," said Jim. "But where's Marthy? She hain't a-gonna go on no vessel w'at's been cussed, 'cause that boat is gonna go straight

ter Hell if no boat never did! I'm a-gonna git home first and be a-wait-in' fer ye on my front porch. Hey, ye Marthy! Git yer rags tergither and git right over on this her boat as fas' as ye can! Ye hain't a-gonna go on that 'ere vessel! D' ye hear me? Hurry up there! W'at ails ye?"

Marthy was a little astounded to hear her father talk so sharply, but she knew that he meant business, and it was not many minutes before she came climbing back over the rails to the *Mary Watson*.

As the two schooners were leaving the Philadelphia docks the captains continued to call to one another.

"Hey, Sam," yelled Jim, "ye wanta call off them bets?"

"Naw!" answered Sam. "I done tol' ye that I'll see my boat in Hell afore I'd see her beat in a race!"

As they moved down the river the two boats kept close together. When they reached the ocean the next day the *Elsie* headed straight out to sea. The *Mary Watson* kept close to the shore. Cap'm Jim had said that there was "gonna come a squawl, 'cause one of the crew had done turned a hatch-cover bottom upwards". On account of that unfortunate act the captain knew that a squawl was inevitable. All that day the sky was overcast and the wind blew sharply and the sea ran high, but the little boat sailed swiftly and easily.

The next morning found the ships far down the coast. The *Mary Watson* was sticking close to shore. Along the horizon could be seen the tips of the sails of the *Elsie*. Cap'm Jim had

worried all night about Sam Mears' having headed his boat so far out, but it was too late to do anything about it now. It would have been useless anyway. Sam never would do anything that Jim told him to.

The sky was still dark and a heavy gale was blowing. A squawl was sure to come during the day. Nothing could stop it. Marthy had been playing on the deck and had dropped a penny overboard. Now, besides the squawl, there was certainly to be bad luck in some form. Cap'm Jim had scolded Marthy for dropping her coin in the water, but even that could not avert a disaster. But Jim was glad that there were no gulls flying about to light on the mast to add to the ill-omened events which had already occurred.

Late in the afternoon the squawl struck the ship. The winds blew gales. The seas were heavy. The little vessel tossed about as if it were but a toy. Everything on deck was battened down tight. Marthy was sent below to the cabin. There she tried to be brave and not mind the violent motion of the boat. She got out the checker-board and tried to play with the men. The boat rolled so much that the checkers never would stay where she put them. She soon gave up trying to entertain herself that way. Kneeling on the dirty red plush cushions on the seat under the portholes and holding onto the ledge around one hole, she watched the waves rise and fall. At first she found amusement in seeing the strong winds lift tops of the waves and blow them

into a fine spray—just like the spray from a garden-hose. As the winds increased the waves grew higher and the boat rocked more. Marthy now was becoming really frightened. But she could do nothing to ease matters. Turning from the porthole, she lay on the cushioned seat and, grasping the little rail which held the cushions in place, soon fell asleep.

On deck Cap'm Jim was having a hard time. The rain had turned into snow. He could scarcely see the bow of the boat from his post behind the wheel. The waves were now washing over the deck. There was little that could be done. It was impossible to make any headway in such a tempest. If the ship could be kept from being torn to pieces it would be all he could wish for. All night Jim held the wheel. The mate came up several times bringing coffee and toast. To eat in such a storm was hardly possible though. When daylight came Jim went below and turned in and the mate took the wheel.

Marthy did nothing all day but sit on the seat along the bulwark and look scared. The storm continued to rage all that day just as hard as it had during the night. When the Captain awoke he prepared a little food for Marthy and himself and tried to comfort his daughter. About four o'clock he relieved the mate. For all the men knew, the boat might as well have been out in the middle of the Atlantic. They were completely off their course. They would have to wait for better weather before they could get their bearings again.

Cap'm Jim wanted to turn in below Ocean City and go down to Chincoteague on the bay which would be much safer than the open sea. Chincoteague Island is located on the sea-side of the Eastern Shore of Virginia. It is not in the ocean, however, for there is Asateague Island just to the east which protects it from the sea. Asateague extends clear up the coast for thirty miles or more. It was for the bay between Asateague and the mainland that Cap'm Jim was heading.

Ever since the storm had started the *Elsie* had been out of sight. But with such rough sailing Jim could not be bothered with worrying about other ships. His own was enough for one time.

Late in the night the squawl began to subside. It was wearing itself out. It would not last much longer. By noon on the following day the sun had come out, but the wind was still strong and the sea heavy. It took the little schooner more than twenty-four hours to get back on its course. Its pilots had held it very well during so severe a storm. In the afternoon of the seventh day out from Philadelphia the *Mary Watson* passed through the inlet and entered the northern end of Chincoteague Bay.

When Cap'm Jim docked his boat on the island the next afternoon a goodly crowd was there to greet him and congratulate him for his having come safely through the storm.

As was Jim's custom, he never

drank on board his ship, but as soon as he landed he always made up for the time spent on the water. As soon as he got home he sent Marthy and Orrie, her little brother, down to Ole Man Iry Bunting's for a gallon of his best liquor.

In spite of the liquor, Jim could not forget the *Elsie*. That night he slept poorly and kept wondering how Sam Mears had made out during the squawl. The next day found him down at the dock quite early. The *Elsie* was not in sight. During the day he went down and looked up and down the bay a number of times. For several days following he watched almost continually. What had happened to the boat? Had no one seen her? Had no one even heard anything about her? Could it be possible that she had—? No, that could not have happened. Sam was too much of a sailor and too fine a captain for that.

Some time later Jack Phillips was out tonging in his oyster-beds. Among the trash that every tonger always pulls out of the bottom of the sea, Jack fished up a newly splintered board. There was some iron-work on it that had carried to the bottom. It was painted white and in gilt were the letters ELSIE. When he got back to the shore he showed it to the men around the dock. Among them was Cap'm Jim. Looking sorrowfully at the only vestige that remained of the ship, he said softly, "Lordy, w'at a infernal 'spensive bet Sam Mears done made fer hisself!"

The American Small Town: A Brief Sketch

By IMA HONAKER HERRON

A FOREWORD

IN English literature a recurrent theme, and one variously treated by many types of writers, is that of the English village and the life connected with it.¹ Chaucer's Prologue, for instance, tends to make one, with William Morris,

Forget six counties overhung with smoke,
Forget the snorting steam and piston stroke,
Forget the spreading of the hideous town;
Think rather of the pack-horse on the down,
And dream of London small and white and clean,
The clear Thames bordered by its gardens green. . . .

A mere listing of the novelists, the dramatists, the poets, and the diarists who have pictured the changing panorama of English town life would include familiar names from the time of the Canterbury journey to the commercialization of Bennett's Five Towns. In American literature, particularly in its earlier stages, the literary treatment of the English town and village has furnished a tradition, a guidepost, for a similar picturing of the American community. It must be

remembered, however, that the English tradition with its association of Old World folkways and mores was transplanted to a new land where literary history was yet to be made. In short, the English theme, as reflected in American literature, was varied to suit the ways of a new land and a still newer civilization. With the growth of American individualization the contrast between both the actual and the literary-depicted American villages and their English prototypes has become more and more marked. Virginia Woolf, English herself, shows an awareness of the now obvious fact that

. . . clearly the English tradition is already unable to cope with this vast land, these prairies, these cornfields, these lonely little groups of men and women scattered at immense distances from each other, these vast industrial cities with their skyscrapers and their night signs and their perfect organization of machinery. It cannot extract their meaning and interpret their beauty. How could it be otherwise? The English tradition is formed upon a little country; its center is an old house with many rooms each crammed with objects and crowded with people who know each other intimately, whose manners, thoughts, and speech are ruled all the time, if unconsciously, by the spirit of the past. But in America there is baseball instead of society; instead of the

¹ L. S. Wood and H. L. Burrow in their small anthology *The Town in Literature* (Nelson and Company, 1925) show how London and other English municipalities have been featured in English literature.

old landscape which has moved men to emotion for endless summers and springs a new land, its tin cans, its prairies, its corn-fields flung disorderly about like a mosaic of incongruous pieces waiting order at the artist's hands; while the people are equally diversified into fragments of many nationalities.²

"The history of a nation is only the history of its villages written large.³ Thus did Woodrow Wilson, writing in 1900, summarize the course of American national development and reaffirm that "local history is the ultimate substance of national history." It is granted that local history is more significant in its relation to the greater whole than in any lonely isolation it may possess and that

it is (but) a stage upon a far journey: it is a place the national history has passed through. There mankind has stopped and lodged by the way.⁴

The history of American small town life, then, can be written in no single paged chronicle, for many pages, dealing though they may with the local records of the most remote towns, form authentically a part of the national record. In "the great and spreading pattern" of America, small town life has added numerous variously designed details. As explained by Wilson, there is in American local history

all the intricate weaving, all the delicate shading, all the nice refinement of the pat-

²"American Fiction," *The Saturday Review of Literature*, August 1, 1925.

³*Mere Literature and Other Essays*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1900. See the essay "The Course of American History."

⁴*Op. cit.*

tern,—gold thread mixed with fustian, fine thread laid upon coarse, shade combined with shade. Assuredly it is *this* that gives to local history its life and importance.

The records of a country-side where today there is little more than a small village or so, may throw much light on the trend of American literary thought and economic changes.

Because pioneer America was naturally a country of small, isolated settlements set down on the seaboard of a vast wilderness, it was in accordance with human custom that its local historians should concern themselves with the minutiae of community activity. As the American settlement has progressed through various frontiers to modern industrialization first the village, an offshoot of the English community, and later the small town, an Americanized product, have supplied varied backgrounds, characters, and plots for a multiplicity of literary and would-be literary compositions.

The literary records of the American town indicate that since the time of the New England "commune" to the present community life has first crystallized around a set of social conventions which after serving their purpose have given way to newer adjustments. The history of the American small town, then, must show that the scene gradually changes from the rather primitive village background borrowed from a European prototype to a town life divorced from the English tradition and reflective of distinctly American customs. Since the beginning of our literature of the town economic changes have been mirrored,

sometimes with a marked degree of verisimilitude and sometimes otherwise, in all forms of fiction. One of the fundamentals in the written expression of the town spirit is the fact that *usually* the distinctive literary depiction of a community, especially that of the colonial era, did not appear until long after the actual events had occurred. Consider the fact that the depiction of Boston and Salem in *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of the Seven Gables* was written years after the passing of the locales described. Another illustration, though slight, is found in the cityward movement of the rural population in Illinois from 1900 to 1910 and in the subsequent decay of many villages in that state.⁵ Five years latter *The Spoon River Anthology* made its appearance. Sometimes, however, actual regional progress and fictionalized portrayal have been contemporaneous. In recent years the economic standardization of the small town has been directly reflected in literature by such expounders as Sinclair Lewis, Sherwood Anderson, and Floyd Dell who have actually seen town life gradually fitting itself to the same general mold whether the community be one near the industrial centers or in an agricultural district. In some instances, as in *Main Street*, the curves of economic development and literary depiction parallel.

The small town is merely one phase of a social and economic process begun

⁵ Hoagland, H. E., "The Movement of Rural Population in Illinois," *The Journal of Political Economy*, XX, pp. 913-927.

with the founding of Jamestown and is still unfinished, despite the last census report relative to the decline of the township. Its literary history, too, has grown in distinctiveness and has become increasingly more and more differentiated from the literature of the parent stock.⁶

I

Julia Patton opens her book, *The English Village*, with a series of statements which may be aptly applied to the American small town as many people like to regard it. She begins:

It may be pretty safely said that all the world loves a village. Everybody feels the charm of a "little town." Not to live in necessarily: one may love it as Newman is said to have loved children, "in idea." But there is something essentially appealing to the village "idea" to which few people are indifferent,—something small and intimate and endearing. Close to humanity and close to nature is the village, and small enough to be grasped imaginatively as a city with its vast complex of interests and institutions and activities can not be.

In the course of her exposition Miss Patton refers to the American town as an example of

. . . those prosaic little communities which our own American childhood and youth have known with an intimacy past any possibility of glamor, and which we modestly call "small towns" rather than by the more poetic name of village; these too have their charm, the charm of a familiar homeyness impossible to a large town or city.

In spite of the changes wrought by modern inventions, there still lingers

⁶ The writer is at work on a literary history to be called *The Small Town in American Literature*.

about the typical little English or Scotch village an air of antiquity to which hardly the most unobservant can be insensitive. Among the English Lakes, in Ayrshire, and elsewhere the inns with their queer and age-worn signs, the small stone churches, the narrow streets, and the quaint houses suggestive often of "Quality Street" hint a past entirely un-American. In America the situation is different. As the migration of people westward directed its course into the free lands of our country the English village form, transplanted by the English settler, gradually underwent a disintegration. In the western world of today there may be found the modern village or town settlement of various types, principally the American, variations of the European, and the familiar farmstead.⁷ In general, the villages, or rather the small towns, of America are merely aggregates of population without the form of ancient community life. Some types of New England villages, perhaps, *are* suggestive of past generations, but a town of the American plains with its square outline, its right-angled streets, and its smart brick schoolhouse, seems entirely of the present. Still farther west the newness of the town is even more pronounced.

What, after all, is a small town? The average American

has driven through the brick-built, pre-revolutionary village of McVeytown, Pennsylvania, and through brand-new Tulsa, Oklahoma. . . . He has caught varied glimpses of the spirit of the country in the

⁷ Sims, Newell L., *The Rural Community*, p. 133.

settled prosperity of the plain frame houses of the Middle West and the delicate and forlorn distinction of white Southern houses in a pleasant dilapidated landscape; in the new settlements of tourist cabins that shelter a nomad population; and those deserted mining towns where pack-rats scamper over decaying floors. . . . At the end of such a journey, the much talked of standardization of gasoline-stations and chain stores seems nothing but a hasty superstructure erected of necessity . . . to bridge the mighty gaps of an overwhelming variety.⁸

No one doubts, however, but that despite these extravagant differences all of these towns are American, bound together by something strangely homogeneous. How different and how alike they are! Any definition applicable to the whole must necessarily be elastic for throughout American history the town has occupied a place of large influence.

In all probability the term "village" will suggest entirely different things to different persons. To some will come remembrance of small houses and a few cross-road stores located in a community without railroad service. To others "village" will seem an outmoded word. They would think rather of a little town with busy ways, perhaps a small manufacturing plant, a Kiwanis Club, a brick Farmers and Merchants bank, and a newly paved main street or square. Others even more cosmopolitan-minded will think of what Vogt describes as a "sleeping community" connected by bus or interurban with

⁸ Suckow, Ruth, "The Folk Idea in American Life," *Scribners*, LXXXVIII, p. 246.

a nearby city.⁹ The East Texas oil boom town, the Colorado mining camp, the company-owned factory settlement, the beach or lake resort, and the college center all bear the name of town. No hard and fast line of definition can be drawn.

Paul Harlan Douglass gives a rather general, though apt, characterization when he says that the small town is a sort of middle-man, "a negligible buffer . . . impotent between two mighty neighbors" located as it is between the open country and the city and partaking on a petty scale of the nature of both.¹⁰ "After the isolation of the one leaves off, but before the congestion of the other begins, comes this neuter, sharing the contempt which follows its class."

According to the reports of the United Census Bureau the entire population of our country is by residence either urban or rural. The small town, then, is given no definite place in this scheme of things. There is no taking into account of the scores of full-fledged municipalities of no more than a few hundred people. Another generalized interpretation is that "city" in America may mean anything from a few thousand population upward. Again certain general notions would render preclusive the individuality of the small place in that, as been suggested, the town is divided between the country and the city, temporarily attached now to the one, now to the other. Too often the fact is

overlooked that the small town is really a concentrated neighborhood with interests varying in accordance with its location. Even though the census does fix a population of twenty-five hundred as the boundary between country and city, size does not always stamp a citizenry as forming a little town or a city. Sometimes, as is shown in Sinclair Lewis's *Zenith*, cities of a hundred thousand people are but exaggerated country towns. Twenty-five hundred, however, is the usual town size and conditions remain on a relatively small scale until a greater upward climb in population is accompanied by a change from village to urban characteristics. It must be remembered, moreover, that some towns, such as those in western Texas, Arkansas, and Oklahoma, are country-minded and have standards of living adaptable to the open country; others, like those in the vicinity of New York or Chicago, are so urban-minded that they are merely extensions of the city. With this regard any consideration, literary or factual, of the American small town must rest upon the fundamental that towns have various reasons for existence. With the existence in the United States today of over eighteen thousand towns and small cities having a population of less than five thousand numerous varieties of town types must necessarily exist. Among the many individual smaller communities there are those in the North Central states centering around the grain elevators; Mid-Western centers of retail distribution of goods to rural population; small manufac-

⁹ Vogt, Paul, *Introduction to Rural Sociology*, p. 356.

¹⁰ *The Little Town*, p. 3.

turing centers such as those in New England or North Carolina; small coastal towns; and others *ad infinitum*. Truly the small town has assumed definite, though varying, proportions. G. K. Chesterton gives a biased economic estimate when he puts the American small town in the same class with Câpek's robots. In reality the standardization of the modern town is superficial and largely overrated by such foreign travellers as Chesterton and St. John Ervine.¹¹

After all, though American towns may look alike to the traveller who views them casually from the Pullman coach window, towns in various communities are actually found to be individual if one stays long enough to make a careful study of the people and local customs. Did not John Millington Synge live for months with the native fisher folk on the northwestern Irish islands and coast before writing his sympathetic interpretation of their beliefs in *Riders to the Sea*?

II

The small town of today has not always been marked by its present characteristics.¹² The term "town" has a modern connotation, one associated with fairly recent community ways and mores. Just as the literary

¹¹ In his "American Literature: Now and to Be" (*Century*, March 1921) Ervine contrasts the highly individualized English village with what he calls the standard American town "manufactured by machinery and dropped at regular intervals about the country."

¹² Space does not allow for the tracing of certain pronounced historic trends in town development.

village or town is known to have passed through such stages as the provincial village, the mid-western town, and the Southern town, similarly has the actual town undergone social and economic changes. Before the appearance of modern improvements on the national horizon, the small town was chiefly distinguished by a distinctly rural and often melancholy peacefulness. It was rightly a "rural village community", usually a non-industrial or non-urban place set down in the midst of the open country. Some of its most exciting contacts were with communities of a like type. Over many such communities hung an air of depression, destructive of the ambitious spirit of youth and yet, as shown in the recent census bulletins, influencing this spirit to seek adventure and livelihood in wider fields. Amusements were of the simplest type; the bucolic note was ever present. Illustrative of this is Rollin Lynde Hartt's description—written in 1899—of a typical New England village of that period:

We are an old-fashioned folk in Sweet Auburn—we go to church. We think we ought to; besides we can't help it. . . .

To obey the insistent behest of the church bell is perchance to learn that Jim Asa meditates shingling his barn, or that Ichabod's Alderney is stricken with the garget, or that Deacon Abram has slain his fatted Chester Whites. When the old Cap'n Anthony homestead had gone up in lamentable flames late one Saturday night, and kept us all awake until morning, I said, "Slender congregation to-day for the Little Giant"—wherein I erred. There were more wor-

shippers than usual. They came to talk it over.¹³

Carl Van Doren also paints a picture of the American village, or small town, as it existed before the advent of the talkies, the automobile, and the radio brought its citizens into an ever increasing contact with the city. Mr. Van Doren says that certain critical dispositions, aware of agrarian discontent or given to a preference for cities, might now and then lay disrespectful hands upon the life of the farm; but even these usually hesitated to touch the village, sacred since Goldsmith in spite of Crabbe, sacred since Mrs. Stowe in spite of E. W. Howe.

The village seemed too cozy a microcosm to be disturbed. There it lay in the mind's eye, neat, compact, organized, traditional: the white church with tapering spire, the sober schoolhouse, the smithy of ringing anvil, the corner grocery, the cluster of friendly houses, the venerable parson, the wise physician, the canny squire, the grasping landlord softened or outwitted in the end, the village belle, gossip, atheist, idiot, jovial fathers, gentle mothers, merry children, cool parlors, shining kitchens, spacious barns, lavish gardens, fragrant summer dawns and comfortable winter evenings. These were elements not to be discarded lightly, even by those who say that time was discarding many of them as industrial revolutions went on planting ugly factories alongside the prettiest brooks, bringing in aliens who used unfamiliar tongues and customs, and fouling the air with smoke and gasoline.¹⁴

¹³ "A New England Hill Town," *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 93, pp. 561-574.

¹⁴ *Contemporary American Novelists*, "The Revolt from the Village."

Sarah Orne Jewett's lament over the decay of the older type of New England village is indicative of the very changes in mode of living which resulted in the metamorphosis of the rather isolated village into the small town with more varied contacts.¹⁵ She maintains that for many years New England was simply a bit of Old England transplanted.

During colonial days the customs and ideas of the mother country were followed from force of habit. Now the old traditions have had time to disappear almost entirely even in the most conservative and least changed towns. The true characteristics of American society show themselves more and more distinctly to the westward of New England and come back to it in a tide that steadily sweeps away the old traditions.

Miss Jewett concludes:

I suppose that elderly people have said ever since the time of Shem, Ham, and Japhet's wives in the ark, that society is nothing to what it used to be. But the fact remains that a certain element of American society is fast disappearing, giving place to the new. . . .

The gradual metamorphosis of the peaceful village into the modern town is evidenced in the tremendous growth and power and influence of secret societies, of chambers of commerce, of boosters' clubs of every conceivable variety—even the larger cities sponsor trade trips—of the Ford car, of motion pictures, of talking machines and the radio, of evangelists, of the "Saturday Evening Post," of Brownings societies, of church socials, Ameri-

¹⁵ "From a Mournful Villager," *The Atlantic Monthly*, November 1881.

can Legion parades, pageants, pioneer picnics, family reunions, county fairs, firemen's conventions, and football rallies. These give a fairly true perspective of modern America. In fact, nearly every section of our United States possesses these provincial signs and symbols, characteristics which are found intermingled with those of local individualization. (In this connection recall Ruth Suckow's criticism of American standardization.)

In view of this it has been said that the basic motive of all cultural life in the small town is the social element.¹⁶ The intellectual is usually pushed into the background. Though numbers may rely on book leagues and similar clubs and though such a magazine as *The Saturday Review* may have readers in the most isolated communities, as a general rule there is little demand for the so-called intellectual magazines. Plays which have exclusive appeal to the imagination or the intellect do not, as a rule, meet with popular favor. (The Little Theatre movement and the development of constructive college dramatics have done much to obviate this condition.) On the other hand, drama teeming with simple and primitive emotions or

characterized by the trite devices of hokum attract large audiences. The social atmosphere furnishes for the average American small town its real *raison d'être*.

George Ade once replied to a question concerning some particular distance, "Oh, it's about as far as from the station to the Methodist church." To a small town resident Mr. Ade's comments need no translation, unless one prefers to substitute "as from Purvin's Old Reliable Store to the post-office", or some similar equivalent. On the surface, perhaps, the activities of Main Street may tire us; yet there exists an inner feeling of pride in the homeliness and the simplicity of certain aspects of small-town civilization.

Now that certain foreigners like Bernard Shaw insist on calling us "A nation of villagers" the notably rich literature of village and town life which has developed in this country should be given attention not only because of its intrinsic interest but because of its economic and literary significance. Borrowing the title phrase of Dr. Lowes' brilliant book, may we say that in tracing the changes of the American town in literature, one must remember that the chronicle is one of "convention and revolt".

¹⁶ Reid, Louis R., "The Small Town" from *Civilization in the United States*.

POETRY

Remembrance

By CLOVER HOLLY

I stole a jewel from life as she passed by
And in her loveliest garments she was dressed,
A fairer gem than ever man could buy
Or ever by another was possessed.
Oh—Life may penalize me for my theft
And by some cutting stroke make me repay,
But this I know: tho' nothing else be left
My jewel she can never take away
For it's a memory of something dear
Deeply hidden in my heart of hearts,
And by its glow shall serve to keep you near,
For its sparkle is eternal and its darts
Gleam not with moon on water-starry skies,
But with the light remembered in your eyes.

Portent

By ALTON HURST

A rustling stillness haunts the cringing earth—
Expectant silence—deep, oppressive—waiting.
Evil clouds of blackness curl and twist
Their ugly lips. Soon the sky will loose
Its pent-up anger—sudden, swift, and cruel—
Lashing flares of lightning—threat'ning thunder
Echo in the heavy, murky air—
Majestic, awful, proud of devastation.

A rustling stillness haunts my fearful soul—
Fearful soon the storm in me will burst,
Curl and snarl its ugly, evil lips,
Laughing, mocking, proud of devastation.

The Fox and the Lion

By NEWMAN I. WHITE

The fox and the lion framed a nifty deal
 To be sidekicks in grabbing off a meal.
 The fox-d'you get me? snoops and gets his eye on
 A likely lay, and then tips off the lion.
 The lion cops the swag and all is nifty—
 Except they never split it fifty-fifty.

The fox was sore; he thought it was a frost
 To pony up and then get double-crossed.
 He got the big-head, see?—went on his own
 And tried to pull a killing all alone.
 That's where he pulled a boner; a big mob
 Of men and dogs got wise to him; the job
 Was jinxed, and he got handled pretty rough,
 And since he was a flop at strong-armed stuff,
 They made him kick the bucket. Well, he shouldn't
 Have tried to be a lion when he couldn't.



Examination Grades

By NEWMAN I. WHITE

This is the fare of Fair Hopes Gone Awry
This lecture room, with not one picture hung,
Begirt with blackboard, where for weeks have clung
Despairing scraps of words that once sang high
Some student's one-day triumph (Now they sigh—
Being half-erased—that leaders of one rung
Have scanty reach.) The bright-eyed, eager, young
Aspirants watch the high priest silently.

The priest, in spectacles, draws forth a book,
Intones the ritual . . . "Sixty-four"—a whistle
Under the breath from somewhere, and one book
Of stricken, pure surprise that figs from thistle
Have ripened not at all . . . So, quite forsook
John Jones awaits the Dean's swift, curt epistle.



Five o'Clock Tea

By KATHLEEN HOLLOWAY

CHARACTERS

HELEN BLACK.

MRS. BLACK, *her widowed mother.*

JOHN WALTON.

HILDA, *the maid.*

SCENE

(The luxurious living room of the Blacks' home. At the back center there is a curtained doorway, opening on a hall, which leads to the front door. A door in the right wall leads to the dining-room and thence to the kitchen. A fire burns brightly in the fireplace. Left wall—D.L.)

Discovered: *(Helen, sitting on the divan, D. L. in front of fireplace reading a magazine. She is small and dark, and extremely pretty. She glances at her watch, throws aside the magazine, and gazes dreamily into the fire.)*

MRS. BLACK: *(Entering C. She is small and slender like her daughter, and her hair is snow-white, framing a very young face.)* Oh, Helen are you wearing the bracelet that Mary sent you? *(crosses to her, and sits down beside her.)*

HELEN: Yes, Mother. Why?

MRS. BLACK: It's so lovely that I wanted John to see it. He always appreciates beautiful jewelry so much. I can hardly wait to see your ring.

HELEN: Oh, Mother, you mustn't

talk that way. Why he hasn't even mentioned love to me.

MRS. BLACK: Yes, I know that, but the way he looks at you . . . the very way your father used to look at me . . . I know that look dear. I'm quite sure he loves you.

HELEN *(wistfully)*: I do feel that he does, and yet he has never shown it in any tangible way. And I do love him, Mother.

MRS. BLACK *(complacently)*: Why of course you do, child.

HELEN: But how do you know it, Mother? I never told you.

MRS. BLACK: Mothers have a way of knowing things, my dear. Why just look at you now. You didn't sit around gazing dreamily into space six months ago, before you met John. And you never hear half the things I say to you.

HELEN: Why, Mother, I . . .

MRS. BLACK *(interrupting her)*: Never mind, Helen. Don't try to explain, dear. When your father was paying court to me, I didn't hear half the things that were said to me either. I walked around with my head in the clouds, too.

HELEN *(rising and crossing to her father's portrait, which hangs on the wall above the fireplace)*: He must have been a wonderful lover, Mother. *(Softly)* . . . And you lost him in such

a short while . . . only three years . . .
(*She crosses to her mother, and drawing up a foot stool, sits at her feet.*)

MRS. BLACK (*wiping away the tears which have come into her eyes*): But they were three glorious years, Helen. I hope and pray, Dear, that you and John will be as happy as we were.

HELEN: I mustn't think of that . . . We are only friends. Sometimes I wonder if perhaps that isn't all he wants . . . just my friendship.

MRS. BLACK (*smiling knowingly*): We shall see, Dear. We shall see! And now I think I had better go out and see if Hilda has the tea ready. I want to be sure that she has made plenty of sugar cookies too. They are John's favorite cookies, you know. (*She goes out through the door Right.*)

(*Helen, left alone, walks nervously about the room a moment, picks up the magazine she first had, then puts it down again . . . looks at the clock, and then crosses to the window. An expression of delight lights her features, as she sees John coming. The doorbell rings. Excitedly she runs to the mirror to push a stray strand of hair in place. Hilda enters through the door R., and crosses to the door C., opening on the hallway to answer the doorbell.*)

HELEN: Oh, Hilda!

HILDA (*pausing*): Yes, Miss.

HELEN: It's probably Mr. Walton. Take his hat and coat, and show him in here. Tell Mother that he has arrived.

HILDA: Yes, Miss. (*She goes out door R.*) (*Helen gives a last min-*

ute pat to her hair, straightens the sofa pillows, and advances to meet John with outstretched hands, as Hilda shows him in, and returns to the kitchen. He is a very handsome young man of medium build, with fine features, and a pleasant smile.)

HELEN: Oh, there you are. I've been wondering why you didn't come. (*Shaking her finger at him*). If you had been five minutes later I shouldn't have given you a single one of Hilda's sugar cookies. Not one!

JOHN (*laughingly*): Still cruel as ever, Fair Lady?

HELEN (*pretending to relent*): Well . . . maybe I would have given you one . . . But just *one* mind you! Come, let's sit down. (*Hand in hand they cross to the divan, and sit down on it together.*)

JOHN (*eagerly*): Helen, I . . . Darling, I . . .

MRS. BLACK (*entering door R., and interrupting him*): How do you do, John. (*Crosses to the sofa with her hand extended. John, who has risen at her entrance, looks quite upset, takes her hand in his for a moment, and she sits down in a chair near the sofa. John resuming his seat by Helen on the sofa*): Did you have a good day at the office?

JOHN: Splendid. You know, Mrs. Black, I enjoy the work so much that I really don't realize how tired it makes me, till the end of the day.

HELEN: All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy! You should play more, but you'll be the President of your company yet, won't you, John?

MRS. BLACK: Will you come and

have tea with us often then, John? You'll have lots more leisure time, you know!

JOHN (*laughingly*): I'm afraid you two ladies are flattering me. Is this a conspiracy between you?

HELEN: Of course not. You will be head of your company some day, and then you'll have more time for play.

JOHN (*boyishly*): If I ever did rise to that exalted position, Mrs. Black, I'm afraid I wouldn't be able to have tea with you and Helen at all, for I would be so old that I would be too feeble to go out to tea.

HELEN: Oh, well, what does it matter anyway? President or no president we will always be friends, won't we, John? (*twistfully and appealingly*).

JOHN: Friends? Er . . . (*hesitates, taken aback*): Oh . . . surely. Of course, Helen.

MRS. BLACK (*attempting to relieve the tension*): Since you've been working so hard all day, you must be hungry. (*Rings for Hilda.*) I had Hilda make some of those sugar cookies you are so fond of.

HELEN: I threatened not to give him any if he had been five minutes later.

HILDA (*entering door R.*): Did you ring, Madam?

MRS. BLACK: Yes, Hilda. You may serve the tea now.

HILDA: Yes, Madam. (*Exit door R.*)

HELEN: Oh, John, have you seen "*The Three Sisters*"?

JOHN: Why no, I haven't but I've heard that it's splendid.

MRS. BLACK: I saw it Monday night, and I'm not at all surprised that everyone is talking about it. It really is a worthwhile play.

HELEN: I'm going to the Matinee tomorrow with Margie White. I can hardly wait to see it.

JOHN (*looking terribly disappointed*): Tomorrow afternoon . . .? Why . . .

HELEN: Yes . . . Margie and I always go to the Matinees together. We often go backstage after the plays are over, and meet the actors. It's lots of fun. (*As she talks, John slumps dejectedly on the divan*). I never will forget how thrilled we were when we met Ethel Barrymore! (*Noticing John's dejected attitude*). Why, John, are you tired?

JOHN: No . . . no, not at all.

HELEN: Then why are you so quiet? I guess we haven't given you a chance to be anything else. We've just been chattering like a couple of Magpies, and you haven't been able to open your mouth, have you?

JOHN (*recovering himself completely*): Oh, that's quite all right. I really enjoy hearing you.

(*Hilda enters, wheeling a tea table, which she wheels in front of Mrs. Black.*)

MRS. BLACK: No, Hilda. Let Helen serve. I like to watch her pour tea.

(*Hilda wheels the tea table in front of Helen, and exits door R.*)

JOHN (*fervently*): So do I. You are always lovely, Helen.

HELEN (*laughingly*): Now who is guilty of flattery? This is a conspiracy I'm sure.

JOHN: No, indeed, it isn't. Not guilty, are we, Mrs. Black?

MRS. BLACK: Of course not.

HELEN (*pouring tea*): Sugar and cream for you, Mother. (*She hands the cup to John who crosses to Mrs. Black and gives it to her, returning then to his seat on the sofa.*)

MRS. BLACK: Thank you, John.

HELEN: Lemon and no sugar for you John. Right?

JOHN (*admiringly*): You never forget, do you, Helen? Sugar spoils the taste of good tea.

(*Helen laughingly hands the tea to him, and as she does so, her full sleeve falls back revealing the Mexican bracelet.*)

JOHN (*taking the tea*): What an unusual bracelet!

HELEN (*pouring her own tea*): Yes, isn't it? Mother thought that you would like it because you are interested in foreign jewelry. Would you like to see it? (*Slips it off, and hands it to him.*)

JOHN (*setting his cup of tea down on the serving table, and examining it*): Exquisite workmanship. Mexican, isn't it? (*Handing it back to her.*)

HELEN (*slipping it back on her arm*): Yes; my cousin, Mary, sent it to me just a day or so ago. I don't believe I've told you about her, have I?

JOHN: Why no you haven't.

MRS. BLACK: Mary is an awfully sweet girl. She's been teaching in Mexico for several years. Two years ago she met a young New Yorker who

was there on business. They were mutually attracted and in less than three months they were married.

HELEN: Romantic, wasn't it? Quite a whirlwind courtship and marriage.

JOHN: I should say it was.

MRS. BLACK: But their happiness didn't last very long. He was killed in a Mexican brawl, six months later.

JOHN (*touched*): What a terrible experience! Poor girl.

HELEN: Yes, wasn't it? But we simply cannot get her to come home. We begged her to come and live with us, but she says there she met her Dick, and there she is going to stay, among the surroundings that they both loved.

MRS. BLACK (*looking at portrait*): I can understand her feeling that way, Dear, and I really don't blame her at all.

JOHN: Yes, for after all, the country shouldn't be blamed for the actions of a few of its people.

HELEN: But I just can't understand her staying down there after all that happened. I would be frightened to death!

JOHN: It isn't as bad as that though, Helen. A thing like that rarely ever happens.

MRS. BLACK: He's right, Helen. That was just one case out of a thousand. Besides we have things equally as bad happening here nearly every day.

HELEN (*vehemently*): I'd never feel safe for a minute with those terrible Mexicans glowering at me on every side.

MRS. BLACK: Nonsense, Helen.

You are letting Mary's misfortune warp your whole attitude.

HELEN: Not at all, Mother. I've always hated the Mexicans, and I always will. Dick's death simply convinced me that they are dirty, shiftless savages.

(John looks hopelessly in the fire, a terrible disappointed look on his face.)

MRS. BLACK: You really shouldn't feel that way, Dear. I would love to go down there, and visit Mary for a few weeks, as she has often urged us to do. I think it would be very interesting indeed. Don't you, John?

JOHN *(dazedly)*: Er . . . What's that? Please pardon me, Mrs. Black, I'm afraid I didn't hear what you said.

MRS. BLACK: And where was your mind, young man? *(Shaking her finger at him coyly)*. I was just telling Helen that I thought a visit in Mexico would be very interesting, but she won't hear of visiting Mary, even for a couple of weeks.

JOHN: I've always thought I would like Mexico. Somehow, the glamor appeals to me . . . the Fiesta de las Flores—haunting music . . . moonlight . . . *(dreamily)* I could think of many worse places to live. *(Almost pleadingly)*. Helen, are you quite sure that you wouldn't live there under any conditions?

HELEN *(wondering at the serious manner in which he puts this question to her)*: Live there! I should say not! Life would be too full of fear. Those Mexicans would frighten me to death in less than two weeks, I'm sure!

JOHN: Are you really serious?

HELEN: I was never more serious in my life!

MRS. BLACK *(apologetically)*: Helen feels quite strongly on the subject, John. Ever since Dick's death, her horror of the country has been almost an obsession. You'll have to forgive us for talking about it so much.

HELEN: Yes, John, I'm sure we must have bored you. Shall we talk about something else?

JOHN: Yes-yes, of course. *(Hopelessly)*.

MRS. BLACK: Why, John, your tea is cold, and you've scarcely touched it. Helen, pour John another cup of tea.

HELEN: Give me your cup, John. And do have another sugar cookie. You'll really hurt Hilda's feelings if you don't eat them all up.

MRS. BLACK *(rising and bringing her cup, which she sets on the table, and passing him the plate of cookies. John mechanically takes a cookie and holds it in his hand)*: You really must, John. She is so proud of your liking them so much. *(Hands him the tea which Helen has poured)*.

JOHN *(rejecting the tea and putting the cookie on the table, and rising hastily)*: No, I can't, Mrs. Black. I'm terribly sorry, but I . . . I really must go.

HELEN *(astonished at his sudden leave-taking)*: But, John, you mustn't go. It's early yet. We've hardly seen you.

JOHN: Yes, I know but I have a few things to attend to before six. I'm afraid I shall have to go.

MRS. BLACK: I'll ring for your coat and hat, John, if you insist on going, but I do wish you could be persuaded to stay a little longer.

JOHN: Never mind ringing, Mrs. Black. I'll get my coat and hat on my way out.

HELEN: I'll get them for you, John.

JOHN: No, don't bother, Dear. *(Helen is surprised at this sign of affection.)* Mrs. Black, the tea was excellent. Tell Hilda the cookies were delicious. *(Taking Helen's hand, and pressing it tenderly).* Please don't think I blame you for your decision, Dear. You see, I didn't know about Mary and Dick, but now that I do know, I understand everything. I hope you enjoy the Matinee tomorrow. Good-bye!

(He is gone, without giving Helen, who follows him into the hall, a chance to speak to him. The door slams behind him. Mrs. Black, who is near-sighted, has crossed to the mantel piece to look at the clock to notice the time. As she does so, Helen comes in, a puzzled look on her face.)

HELEN: Mother, what is the matter with John? I never saw him act so queerly before. Why, he wouldn't even give me a chance to speak to him in the hallway a moment ago. He grabbed up his hat and coat, and ran out, for all the world as if he had to make a train.

MRS. BLACK: I'm sure I can't imagine why he acted so strangely. He seemed all upset over something. I wonder . . . *(breaking off, as she notices a letter which is lying flat on the mantel-piece.)* Well bless my

heart, Helen, haven't you gotten this letter yet? *(Picking it up, and crossing to Helen, and giving it to her).* I put it on the mantel this morning when it came, thinking you would find it before lunch. I didn't think to ask you if you did. I stood it right here in front of the clock. It must have slipped down. *(Surprised at Helen's expression as she reads).* Child, what is the matter?

HELEN *(who has opened the letter and read it during her Mother's conversation. Expressions of surprise, joy and then hopelessness cross her face in rapid succession, as she reads)*: It's from John, Mother, he . . .

MRS. BLACK *(breaking in)*: From John! What is he doing, writing to you!

HELEN: Listen. *(Reading).* Dearest:

You must have known that I have been in love with you a very long while . . . ever since the day I met you, but I have been afraid to speak what has been in my heart, while my future was so indefinite. However, my company has offered me a position in Mexico, on condition that I take it at once; so I am leaving tonight, and I'm wondering if you love me enough to marry me, and go with me? If you do, Dear, be ready to leave immediately after tea, as the train leaves at six o'clock. I can hardly wait for your answer. Please let it be yes.

Hopefully yours,

John.

MRS. BLACK: Well! You see, Helen, I told you he loved you.

(Continued on page 32)

BOOK REVIEWS

Good-bye to the Forsytes

Maid in Waiting. By John Galsworthy. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931. Pp. 1-362. \$2.50.

Maid in Waiting is the first novel Mr. Galsworthy has produced in four years; in it he leaves, definitely I hope, the Forsytes and turns again to the county aristocracy, of which he has been so fond of writing. This is the element of society apparently with which Mr. Galsworthy has the greatest affinity, partly by birth, partly by education. Furthermore, it is this element about which Mr. Galsworthy comes perilously near to being sentimental in the present novel.

The family in *Maid in Waiting* are the Charwells of Oxfordshire, who call themselves *Cherrell*; and for fear we may forget the correct pronunciation, Mr. Galsworthy spells them *Cherrell* after his initial explanation. The chief character is Elizabeth Cherrell, who by an over-subtlety on the author's part gives title to the book. Her brother Hubert is in disgrace from an unfortunate archeological expedition to Bolivia, which he undertook with an American professor. He was forced in self-defense to kill a Bolivian half-cast; he is severely criticized in the professor's book. Somebody asks a question in the House of Commons. These events take place before the opening of the novel; the book is spent in getting the question unasked and in marrying off Elizabeth and Hubert.

Whatever merits the novel has lie in the character study of Elizabeth; she is a thoroughly charming young lady and quite convincing. The other characters are less happy; they are either lifeless family portraits, like her parents, or grotesques, like her aunt. The sub-plot between her uncle and Mrs.

Ferse is not very interesting or very real; and at times it is very painful.

F. K. MITCHELL.

What I Thought When I Saw You

The Waves. By Virginia Woolf. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 297 pp. \$2.50.

Followers of the work of Mrs. Woolf have come to expect the unusual. From *Jacob's Room* to *Orlando* her writing has marked her as a creative artist separate and apart from the conventional, and if such a thing be possible, *The Waves* is a step beyond the furthest outpost yet reached. Through all of her experience, using words as a medium of expression, Mrs. Woolf has been seeking the centre of the human mind. And in this new book, which can be called a novel only out of courtesy to the academicians, she wages battle against the obstructive forces of time and space, not because of any inherent distrust as to their symbolic value, but because they stand in the way as barriers between our thoughts and our emotions.

This indication, beforehand, of the objective quality behind *The Waves* and the problem in technique involved, is here given because it explains the course pursued in the unfolding of the narrative. The story is simple, almost mechanical, in its structural outline. There are eight sections, not chapters, each prefaced by an italicized page or two containing a description of the progress of the sun from early morning until evening. It is in these brief passages that Mrs. Woolf creates the illusion of the passage of time. By means of the dew on the grass, the mating song of birds, the rise and fall of the tides, and the play of light and shadow, time serves a double purpose. The

day is not only a day of the week; it is the progress of life in the hands of six children.

Bernard, Susan, Rhoda, Neville, Jinny and Louis are children of different families and different characteristics. They go to school, they play, they eat their meals, and they talk one with another. They grow into young college and university men and women. They experience middle age and old age. Rhoda and Louis marry but are unable to find together the happiness for which they seek. Susan and Bernard find husbands and wives and are happier than either Jinny or Neville or Louis and Rhoda. Bernard is a normal person whose wife and children help to dull the inquisitive edge of mind. Susan as a lover of nature seeks and finds her destiny in her farm, her husband and her children. Occasionally she senses the roughness of her hands; her inability to have taste in dress. She is a foil for the completely self-centered Jinny who is a creature of this world. Jinny is determined to live life while it may be found. Beautiful clothes, the love of men, the richness of good food, the bright polish of finger nails are a part of life to her. Neville and Rhoda are the poetic and the unsettled, but of the two, Rhoda, who follows her course to suicide, is the most unhappy. Louis would, if he could, be more like the practical Bernard, or the dreamy Neville, but he is forever torn between the desire to succeed and the desire to be himself. He is always conscious of a subtle distinction between the two conflicting elements within himself, and because he can never surrender wholly to the one or to the other he is ill at ease.

Percival, who goes to India as an army officer, and who dies there while still a young man is the one other character in the book. Seen always through the eyes of the other characters he never exists save in their minds and in their memories. He is the personification to them of what they had

hoped to be or what they might have been. The dinner they give is for Percival but Mrs. Woolf uses this dinner as a sun-dial at high noon. The shadow falls on Percival in a straight line leaving Bernard and Susan, Rhoda and Louis, Jinny and Neville in the clear light. By means of this farewell dinner we see them as they see each other, and are prepared for their varied reactions to Percival's death. The noon-day sun slants into the shadows of late afternoon and sunset. Rhoda ends her search, the others one by one are reabsorbed into the routine paths they have chosen from childhood. At the end only Bernard, the normal one, views again the mixed shadows criss-crossing in their lives and tries once more to gather from the fading colors the significance behind them.

The Waves ends thus in an analysis of analysis. As the title indicates, it is a book in which thought breaks upon thought only to be followed by still more advances and recessions within the mind. Reviewing the story as a story some critics have said that *The Waves* seems to be a rather thin narrative set in an artificial frame. But the skill with which Mrs. Woolf handles her theme forbids much of such criticism. Over page after page Jinny and Neville, Susan and Bernard, Louis and Rhoda, tell us themselves the thoughts and emotions that come and go in their minds. The story grows not by incident or event but through mental analysis. The color of one's eyes, the set of a necktie or the curve of an arm are of equal importance with birth or death or marriage as facets whereon to catch a ray of sunlight leading to the mind of man.

Despite its success as an example of concentration there are certain qualities in this book that keep it from being one among the greatest. The people in it are rarely more than shadows moving under the sun. They never worry about such practical matters as money or food or shelter or the state of their

health. They never seem to be meeting people. And they never grow in character, but seem to be predestined to live out their lives in the channels set for them by their own minds. But these strictures are not to be made against *The Waves* as a work of art. It is a book filled with beauty and poetry and abstract truth. Line after line deserves to be underscored; whole pages might be quoted as illustrations of experiences through which we have all lived at one time or another. Whatever its limitations may be as a record of physical growth, *The Waves* is, perhaps, the most important book of the past year. In the matter of form and style it is almost certain to be one of the landmarks in the history of the development of the novel in the English tradition.

THOMAS J. SHAW, JR.

Sympathy Enters the Life of a Genius

Bret Harte, Argonaut and Exile: Being an Account of the Life of the Celebrated American Humorist, author of "The Luck of Roaring Camp," "Condensed Novels," "The Heathen Chinee," "Tales of the Argonauts," &c., &c., compiled from new and original sources by George R. Stewart, Jr. Boston and New York: The Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931. Pp. 507. \$5.00.

I wonder why in a day when biographies are so popular there are so few good examples of the type. The reader is usually placed in the dilemma of choosing between a dull, heavy book which may be dependable and a readable biography which has nothing to commend it except its readability. There are too many scholars who cannot write what the public will read, and there are too many facile journalists without conscience as to facts. The year 1932, being the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of George Washington, will bring us several hundred new books and articles. Will more than a half dozen be worth reading? Pro-

fessor Stewart's life of Bret Harte combines qualities rarely found together: it has a fascinating subject, it is readable, it is accurate, and it brings to light new materials.

Harte's life is full of paradoxes. He put California on the literary map for millions of readers, but he was glad to leave it and he never returned. The man who immortalized the frontier miners was a stylishly dressed gentleman of Jewish and Dutch descent. He wrote "The Heathen Chinee," the most famous poem of the day, but he was ashamed of it. He was a loyal American, and yet he spent the last twenty-four years of his life abroad. He was, with the exception of Mark Twain, the most popular writer of his generation; yet such were the conditions of the literary life in his day that he couldn't make a living in this country from his stories, his poems, plays, or lectures. His countrymen made a lion out of him, but they did not make it possible for him to live by his pen. Samuel Butler, the English novelist, once remarked that a genius need not expect a happy time no matter where he lived but that America was the last place on earth in which a genius should be born.

Professor Stewart gives evidence to show that Harte did actually have a brief experience in the miners. Most old Californians held otherwise. A newly discovered episode reveals the youthful Harte as a courageous humanitarian daring to print what he thought of some ruffians who had massacred innocent Indians of all sexes and ages. It would seem that as a result Harte was, like Oakhurst the gambler in "The Outcasts of Poker Flat," ordered to leave town in a hurry. New light is thrown on Harte's early attempts at fiction, which on the whole were poor. His earlier treatment of the miners is unsympathetic, but in 1868 he discovered their real literary value, and "The Luck of Roaring Camp" made him famous almost overnight.

Earlier biographers in general treated Harte unsympathetically. Harte's *Letters*, published in 1926, suggested the need of a reinterpretation of just the kind Professor Stewart has given. He gives us, not the Bohemian who never paid his debts, but the faithful worker who strove almost in vain to make enough money for his children and a rather extravagant wife who hen-pecked him. Some of the defects of the artistic temperament Harte undoubtedly had, but, on the whole, one inclines to admire him. At any rate, a fascinating subject has fallen into the hands of a thoroughly competent biographer.

JAY B. HUBBELL.

*Auto-Biographic Patriotism of
Intense Value*

My United States. By Frederick J. Stimson.
New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 478 pp.
\$3.50.

This interesting and amusing autobiography is divided into two parts, the first being concerned with the United States from within, the second with the United States from without. Its author, a cousin of our present Secretary of State, has lived in forty-seven of our states, has traveled widely in foreign countries, and was our ambassador to the Argentine Republic during the years of the World War.

The purpose of the author is to give a "wormseye view of the U. S. A. as an unimportant, and unobserved observer has, by luck of a fairly wide experience, been permitted to see them and their great men . . . whom he met somewhat off their guard." This he seems to have done very well. The story is meant to be amusing but it is also instructive and has considerable historical value. The treatment is not always chronological. Rather, the writer has attempted by his selection of events, to make vivid some of the important forces with which

the nation has had to deal—early railway building, trusts, war, etc.

In the first part of the book events which surrounded the author's boyhood days, his years at Harvard, and his early world travels, are recounted. After reading these chapters one must almost conclude that Boston is the hub of the universe. Much space is given to New England, especially to Boston and to Harvard. The author sees a decadence in both Boston and Harvard and views it sorrowfully.

The last one-half of the book is given entirely to events of the World War. Here, one is led to believe that Germany was the guilty one in bringing about the World War. Mr. Stimson was in Germany when the war started in 1914. He describes the situation there at the time and his difficulties in getting out of the country. He is by his own words strongly anti-German.

Most space in this part is devoted to his work as ambassador to the Argentine Republic. This is the most interesting section of the book. In it are revealed state secrets, the technique of diplomacy, spying, and intrigue.

Throughout the work, many frank and piercing comments are made, especially with reference to students at college, young professors, underlings in federal departments, and the entire State Department. The remarks seem all the more critical because the writer is trying to entertain the reader while stating what he actually thinks. If only a matter of fact criticism were made, the remarks would seem much softer. But his method seems the better of the two. The happening is impressed more vividly on the reader's mind and he may be encouraged to read in the field of public affairs when, if the treatment were that of the average history, he would not do so. For this, if for no other reason, the book is well worth while.

CHAS. E. LANDON.

Rhythms of a Mad City

Manhattan Sideshow. By Konrad Bercovici. New York: The Century Company. 354 pp. \$4.00.

Color, life, comedy, and tragedy—we see them all through the cosmopolitan pen of Konrad Bercovici. He has felt the very pulse of great Manhattan. He has mingled with the hungry mobs of the breadline, has rubbed shoulders with the riffraff of the ghettos, and has moved freely in the exclusive circles of Park Avenue. Only Bercovici, as one of the few men who really know New York, could have written this *Manhattan Sideshow*, for, in order to present graphically and truthfully the people and the incidents that he discusses, he was compelled to be, not a stranger and a remote critic, but one of the actual mob, living the life of every person he treats.

The book consists of New York personalities, people in all walks of life whom the author has met during his many years of Gotham adventures. Radical or liberal, sinner or saint, rich man or poor man—it matters not to Bercovici. He sees them through the eyes of a master painter, and his pen seems inspired as he writes of each. Once again, we see Valentino at the height of his screen fame, and, for the first time, the great idol's inner self is revealed. Dreiser, Van Loon, and Lewis pass on the stage where Bercovici is unfolding his drama. One feels that these very men—these men aloof from the commonplace—become quite ordinary human beings and associates. We are told stories of the rise and fall of great actors; of millionaires who have become beggars and beggars who have become millionaires; of the families of Riverside Drive and those of the slums of the East Side. Pathos mingles with happiness, tragedy with comedy. Millions of Broadway lights reflect only too well the deep shadows of the tenements. The tinsel and blair of the night clubs form a sharp contrast to the mucky

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J. B. CLARK is a Book Review Editor of *The Archive*.

sordidness of the gutter. Emotions play to each extreme in this Sideshow of Humanity.

In writing *Manhattan Sideshow*, Bercovici utilizes the unique style that has made him famous. He writes lightly but with such an insight into the soul that every phrase, every thought strikes forcibly. He picks his characters at random and describes them one by one, as he, a subtle judge of men, sees them. His sketches are short and crisp, but they are direct and appealing in their humanness. We are made to feel that we have known these people for a long time, and we share their sorrow and their joy. Only a true artist and skilled craftsman could have so vividly constructed this *Manhattan Sideshow*. Bercovici has found the voice of an empire in itself and allows it to speak alone.

J. B. CLARK.

The Past Lives Again in Colorful Realism

Sheridan. By Joseph Hergesheimer. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 367 pp. \$5.00.

In his latest book *Sheridan*, Mr. Hergesheimer has written his first biography. With the exception of the short foreword, however, the work is primarily a military narrative, telling of three major campaigns during the War Between the States: the Tennessee, the Shenandoah, and the Appomattox campaigns.

Through the careful survey of these three struggles, the author has developed the character of Philip Henry Sheridan, the professional fighter. As a professional fighter, it is pointed out that Sheridan had few peers. To quote the author, "He never, finally, lost a battle." In this, Mr. Hergesheimer admits that he was a fortunate commander. He had a particular genius for retrieving victories out of battles all but lost. It was his ability to arouse the enthusiasm of retreating forces, and compel them

through sheer personal magnetism to return to the scene of combat and ultimately defeat the enemy, which has established his famous reputation. But we cannot help questioning his failure to prevent the many retreats which his troops made during the first part of their encounters. In answer to this, the author states that Sheridan's actions cannot be carefully analysed; the fact that he slept in Winchester the night before his famous ride is unimportant; his being drunk or sober at the time is equally unimportant: General Sheridan "by the sheer force of his innate being" achieved his results. This may be entirely true, yet it is scarcely convincing.

Joseph Hergesheimer has in the past acquired a reputation for painstaking work, and for his beauty of expression. He intended early in life to be a painter, and like many other literary figures with the same original aspirations, he has woven into his work a colorful artistry. The military narrative, *Sheridan*, while it does not allow the beauty of style that its author has included in many of his earlier romantic novels, is well written. It is never dry; the individual descriptions of certain battles are exciting, while the diction throughout the work has been carefully chosen, and is dignified.

Nor do we question the painstaking preparation of the book and its accuracy. On page 145 of the first edition, the date 1864 should obviously be 1863. In two separate places, the date of Grant's assumption of control of the Union armies is given as March ninth and March twelfth. Yet these are but minor errors.

Mr. Hergesheimer has not entered his personal point of view in the narrative often. The sections in which he does, however, are among the most informing of the entire book. In the introduction to the description of the Tennessee or mountain campaign, there is a brief study of the causes and effects of war. The author admits the

evils of war through its lack of an ideal and through its necessary barbarity, yet points out that the privilege of anger on the part of individuals and nations is an important one.

In the beginning of his narrative of the Shenandoah valley campaign, the author delves into the causes of the ultimate defeat of the southern forces. Here, Mr. Hergesheimer conclusively shows that the South, with its individualism of the past, and with its romantic bravery and valor, was finally unable to compete with the overwhelming mass of men and metal which was brought down from the North with cold professional skill. Philip Henry Sheridan's greatness lay in his possession of this professional skill which makes for success in the art of modern warfare.

J. L. STEWART.

Oklahoma Writer Dissects Town in His Native State

Oklahoma Town. By George Milburn. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1931. Pp. 321. \$2.50.

In 1894 Hamlin Garland in *Crumbling Idols* protested vigorously against the neglect of indigenous materials by American novelists. He declared then that American life "had only superficial representation in the sketches of the tourist and the reporter; its inner heart has not been touched." It is familiar matter that since that time not only Garland, but other expounders of regionalism have produced a native fiction which in one significant phase has dealt much with village and town life. In fact, the literary history of the American small town has already assumed definite proportions. The depictees have been many—too many, perhaps—and their media varied. And even now when the last census report indicates almost irrefutably that old-fashioned village life in America is gradually disappearing, the literary map continues to be dotted with

newly created towns to be placed alongside the Winesburgs, the Spoon Rivers, the Gopher Prairies, the Old Chesters and the Deephavens. One of the latest fictionalized towns to make its appearance is that of George Milburn's collection, *Oklahoma Town*, delineative of Southwestern folkways and suggestive of the materials richly used in the plays of a more widely known Oklahoman, Lynn Riggs.

This volume, parts of which have appeared in *Folk-Say*, *Vanity Fair* and other periodicals, is comparable to *Winesburg, Ohio* and Ruth Suckow's *Iowa Interiors* in that it contains both stories and episodic sketches of provincial eccentricities—to some extent honest, though often brutally frank, portrayals of the people and the times the young writer has known. If these stories be used as a criterion for judgment it may be said that life in a small town and farming community near Tulsa presents excitingly dramatic mosaics to enliven the drab picture of the commonplace.

Like his more important predecessors in the fictionalization of the small town, Milburn writes of the daily happenings of his community as he has observed them and as he has listened to "old-timers" boastfully tell tall tales of the Indian Territory. Though some of his episodes are no doubt magnified for dramatic effect, Mr. Milburn shows utter familiarity with local idiom and an understanding of the minutiae of small-town life. Sometimes the lives he portrays are twisted, grotesque, and tragic; sometimes homely and pitifully unfruitful; yet again they are normally happy.

Though he uses bits of village themes akin to those of Anderson, Lewis, and Masters, Mr. Milburn's fresh material gives one an opportunity of enjoying anew rather familiar scenes in which a varied, yet in many respects typical, citizenship takes part. In only slight instances is the background an irritant for the characters. Milburn

makes no addition to the literature of discontent, nor does he emulate Sinclair Lewis by warring against the "village virus" or other American bogeys. Those readers who know small-town life in its true perspective will concede the point that though some of the stories are really crass, Milburn's stories give a frankly realistic and thoroughly entertaining treatment of the American scene.

IMA HONAKER HERRON.

FIVE O'CLOCK TEA

(Continued from page 24)

HELEN: Yes, but Mother, you don't seem to realize that he has gone . . . gone! (*Hopelessly*). When I love him so! He must have thought that I was trying to tell him indirectly that I wouldn't marry him, when I told him how I hated Mexico. As if I wouldn't live anywhere in the world as his wife! (*Walking up and down the room excitedly*). Oh, Mother, what shall I do?

MRS. BLACK (*composedly*): You shouldn't be so upset, Dear. You can get his address from the company, and write him.

HELEN (*impatiently*): But that will take so long! Don't you see, that now that I know he loves me, I must see him at once, and tell him how much I love him.

(*She dashes excitedly from the room*).

MRS. BLACK (*calling to her*): Helen, where are you?

HELEN (*calling from off stage*): In my room, Mother.

MRS. BLACK: What's the matter? Are you crying, Dear?

HELEN: Crying? I should say not! I'm happier than I've ever been in my life!

MRS. BLACK (*bewildered*): Happy? But I thought you loved John.

HELEN (*entering with her hat and coat on, her pocketbook in her hand*): I do. That's why I'm happy!

MRS. BLACK: Why, Helen, where are you going? You can't possibly get his address now. The company's offices are all closed till tomorrow.

HELEN (*leaning over, and kissing her mother lightly on the cheek*): But I'm not going to try to get his address, Mother! (*Crosses to the door*).

MRS. BLACK: Well, where are you going then?

HELEN: It's not six yet. I still have twenty minutes to catch the train. Lordy, what a lot can be done in twenty minutes! Wish me a happy honeymoon, Mother. I'll wire you from Mexico!

(*She vanishes through the doorway. The front door slams. Mrs. Black rises and slowly crosses to stand beneath the portrait of her husband.*)

Quick Curtain

The ARCHIVE

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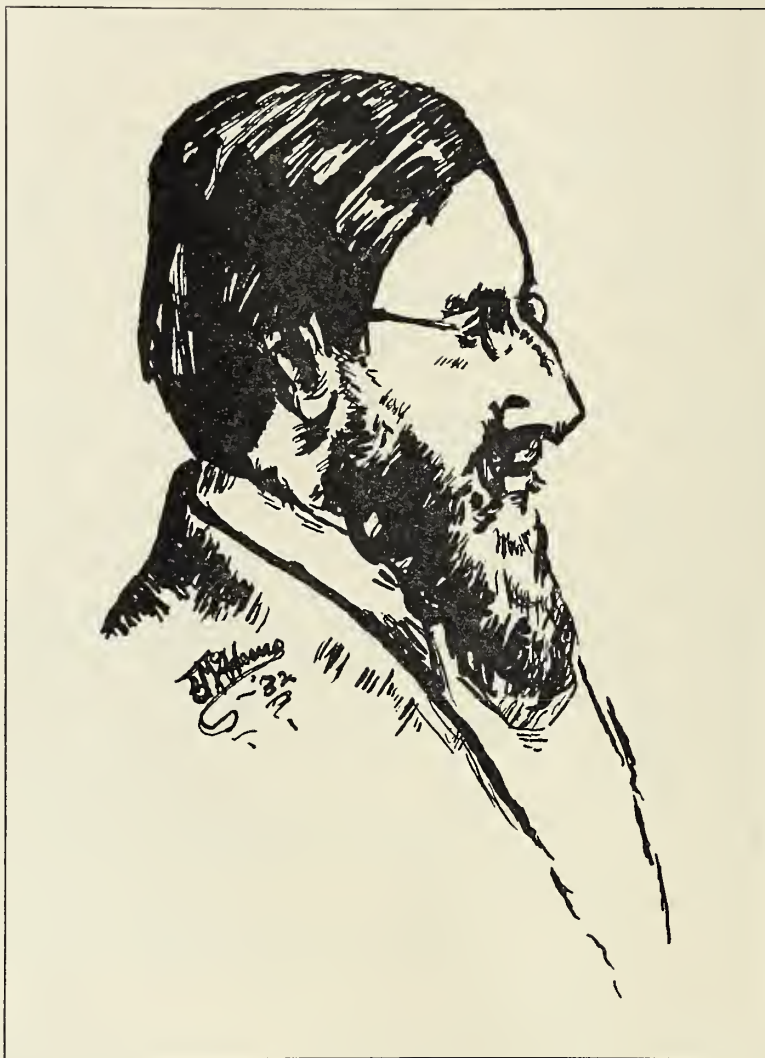
CONTENTS

	PAGE
Frontispiece	Laura Jean McAdams 4
<p>Miss McAdams, who sketched the portraits of Agnes Repplier and Lytton Strachey for this issue, is a candidate for a Ph.D. in Latin. Formerly she was engaged in teaching art. This is her first work to appear in the ARCHIVE.</p>	
Editorial	5
<i>Poetry</i>	
Change of Wind	Robert P. Tristram Coffin 6
<p>Mr. Coffin's fourth volume of verse, <i>The Yoke of Thunder</i>, will be published by the Macmillan Company early in the spring. His recent biography, <i>Portrait of an American</i>, has gone into the second edition. At present he is engaged as professor of English at Wells College, Aurora-on Cayuga, N. Y. Mr. Coffin has been appointed Phi Beta Kappa poet for the June commencement at Harvard, an honor which has been bestowed on some of America's most distinguished poets.</p>	
Evening Star	Edwin Björkman 7
<p>Mr. Björkman, a well-known poet of Asheville, N. C., was formerly with the Asheville Times. In 1927 his <i>Gerhardt Hauptman: A Tribute</i> was published in the ARCHIVE.</p>	
Northern Afternoon	Helen Poteat Stallings 9
<p>Mrs. Stallings lives in Yanceyville, N. C. Her poems, <i>Apple Harvest</i> and <i>Pigeon Valley</i> were published in 1926. She is the daughter of William Louis Poteat, President-emeritus of Wake Forest College, and the wife of Lawrence Stallings, of <i>Big Parade</i> fame.</p>	
Spring Warning	Newman I. White 9
<p>Dr. White is professor of poetry in Duke University. His work appears from time to time in the ARCHIVE.</p>	
Music	May Folwell Hoisington 10
<p>Mrs. Hoisington is chairman of the poetry division of the National League of American Pen Women. She is a teacher of poetry, and is widely known for her translations of French, Persian, and Afghani verse. Her poetry appeared in the ARCHIVE in 1925-26. She lives in Rye, N. Y.</p>	
July Night	May Folwell Hoisington 10
Kin	Robert P. Tristram Coffin 11
Autumn Occurrence	David Cornel DeJong 11
<p>Mr. DeJong is in the English graduate School. His work has appeared in such magazines as <i>Pagany</i>, <i>Poetry</i>, <i>College Anthology of Verse</i>, and <i>American Literature</i>, a publication of the Duke University Press.</p>	
The Crow and the Serpent	Newman I. White 13
"If There Were Dreams to Sell, What Would You Buy"?	Newman I. White 13
The Kingfisher	Robert P. Tristram Coffin 14
A Foggy Night	May Folwell Hoisington 14
Crying as Gulls Cry	David Cornel DeJong 15
Rhythm of Madness	J. B. Clark 16
<p>Mr. Clark is book review editor of the ARCHIVE. He has many plays and poems published.</p>	
Rejuvenation	Tom Carriger 16
City Morning	Raven I. McDavid, Jr. 17

Age	Tom Carriger	17
Agnes Repplier (<i>drawing</i>)	Laura Jean McAdams	18

Book Reviews

<i>Times and Tendencies</i>	Ovid W. Pierce, Jr.	19
<i>American Writers on American Literature</i>	Jay B. Hubbell	20
Dr. Hubbell is professor of American literature in Duke University. Besides being chairman of the editorial staff of <i>American Literature</i> , he is a frequent contributor to literary magazines.		
<i>The Periodicals of American Transcendentalism</i>	Jay B. Hubbell	22
<i>George Washington: Republican Aristocrat</i>	Alan K. Manchester	22
Dr. Manchester is in the history department of Duke University.		
<i>Frail Anne Boleyn</i>	Thomas J. Shaw, Jr.	25
Thomas J. Shaw completed his master's degree from Duke University in 1931. He has contributed consistently good material to the ARCHIVE of which he was formerly book Review editor. He is now living in Greensboro, N. C.		
<i>My Sister's Story</i>	Marie Updike White	26
Mrs. White is a member of the Duke faculty who has previously contributed to the ARCHIVE.		
<i>Charcoal and Chalk</i>	Elizabeth Bulluck	27
Miss Bulluck is co-ed editor of the ARCHIVE. She has made frequent contributions to the review section.		
<i>Radio to Daedalus</i>	Elizabeth Bulluck	28
<i>Trouble in the Balkans</i>	Mary O. Cowper	29
Mrs. Cowper is the wife of Dr. F. A. G. Cowper of the French department. This is her first work to appear in the ARCHIVE.		
<i>The Negro Author</i>	Mary Heston Martin	30
Miss Martin is an undergraduate student in English. Her reviews have appeared in the ARCHIVE and the <i>Distaff</i> .		
<i>Trailing Trade a Million Miles</i>	Charles E. Landon	31
Dr. Landon, joint author of the textbook, <i>Modern Industry</i> , is assistant professor of economics at Duke University.		
<i>The Outlook for Literature</i>	David K. Jackson, Jr.	33
Mr. Jackson is in the graduate English department. His work has appeared frequently in the ARCHIVE.		
<i>Special Hunger: The Tragedy of Keats</i>	J. B. Clark	34
<i>Joseph Smith and His Mormon Empire</i>	J. L. Stewart	35
Mr. Stewart is an assistant editor of the <i>Chronicle</i> . He was formerly a member of the ARCHIVE staff.		
<i>Dostoevsky: A New Biography</i>	L. J. Clark	36
Mr. Clark is president of the Liberal Club.		
<i>The Trial of Jeanne d'Arc and Other Plays</i>	Ovid W. Pierce, Jr.	37
<i>Hatter's Castle</i>	Andreas J. Darlson	38
Mr. Darlson is a Duke undergraduate actively connected with the university dramatic organization.		
<i>The Flesh Is Weak</i>	J. L. Stewart	39
<i>Two People</i>	Katherine Louise Sawyer	39
Miss Sawyer is an undergraduate student in English. This is her first contribution to the ARCHIVE.		



GILES LYTTON STRACHEY

The ARCHIVE

February, 1932

Vol. XLIV

No. 5

EDITORIAL

WHAT the ultimate significance of the biographical works of the late Giles Lytton Strachey will be is hard to determine. Yet there is little dissent that he has done the most distinctive work in English biography since 1900. His studies in volume are slim; but in them can be found the initial genius of what has come to be known as the modern school of biography. In Germany, work of the same type (but considered by most critics inferior) has been done by Emil Ludwig; in France, by André Maurois, best known for his studies of Shelley and Disraeli.

Strachey's first work, *Landmarks in French Literature* appeared in 1912. In 1918 he published his portraits of four *Eminent Victorians*: Cardinal Manning, Florence Nightingale, Dr. Arnold, and General Gordon. In 1922 appeared *Books and Characters*; and in 1926 his Leslie Stephens lecture on Pope. Then followed his biographies of the two great English Queens, Elizabeth and Victoria.

Queen Victoria, which has been read as widely as any contemporary fiction, is the completest expression of his notion of what biography should be. He has made the royal lady an eminently human woman. Strachey's own statement best explains his conception of a biographer's purpose: "To preserve, for instance, a becoming brevity—a brevity which excludes everything that is redundant and nothing that is significant—that, surely, is the first duty of the biographer. The second, no less surely, is to maintain his own freedom of spirit. It is not his business to be complimentary, it is his business to lay bare the facts of the case, as he understands them. That is what I have aimed at . . . to lay bare the facts of some cases, as I understand them, dispassionately, impartially, and without ulterior intentions."

The death of this man who protested against the "two fat volumes of panegyrics for biography" is unquestionably a loss to English letters.

POETRY

Change Of Wind

By ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

"The wind is changing." Sudden flaws
Spread fanwise on the placid lake
Like someone breathing on a glass
For his idle pleasure's sake.

"The wind is changing." That is all,
Four such simple words as these,
Yet in their easy syllables
Are written books of agonies.

For some millions of the race
Who wear their bones for skin and crawl
On six brains stretched out into wires
These words are handscript on the wall.

For those whose bodies are as harps
Played on by the breezes' breath,
For those who live upon their wings
This change of wind is sudden death.

And other multitudes are doomed
Whose life is flagons edged with lace
And filled with honey to entice
Aliens to propagate their race.

Lower yet the doom descends
To stagnant water where there spins
A world that swarms with walking trees,
Painted clowns, and Eastern jinns.

At its very heart of hearts
The universe becomes deranged,
And systems kin to nebulae
Perish, now the wind is changed.

Evening Star

By EDWIN BJÖRKMAN

What yet remains of life seems like a stretch
 Of empty road that turns a little way
 Ahead and disappears. What waits beyond
 That turn, of novelty or nothingness,
 No one can tell. The air is thick with talk
 Of threats and promises, of fears and hopes,
 But all such wayside gossipings pass through
 My brain like evening breezes through a tree.
 I know that no one else knows more than I.
 Content with this, I trudge my destined way.
 A longish journey lies behind, and yet
 The fatal, ever beckoning goal recedes
 And seems no nearer now than when a child
 First saw a playmate swept beyond its shade.
 Still firm my step, still firm my faith, in life
 As in myself. I question little, care
 Much less. Step after step I trudge along,
 Nor moved by dreams, nor hell by hampering qualms.
 When at the appointed hour I pass from sight,
 Life will go on. That is enough for me.

And yet at times there is an aching void
 Within my heart. With emptiness my soul
 Turns sick, and all of me grows bitter with
 A sense of lack and loss, of want and need,
 That no philosophy has yet appeased.
 Then long and lonely seems the road, with ne'er
 A footfall to disturb its deathlike peace.
 Then turns to gall the very taste of life;
 Grey gloom pervades the sky, and prison walls
 Appear where until then stood living trees.
 Then in a flash I know that through the years
 This sense of utter lack, of bitter need,
 Has borne me company since first I felt
 The grievously delicious sting of life's
 Most poignant goad. And lead is in my feet.

Still, step by step, I trudge my destined way,
Until the pall of gloom begins to lift,
Until the hemming walls begin to drop,
And through a widening gap my startled eye
Beholds a far-flung view of hills and vales,
Of fields and forests, clear to the world's brim.
The sun has set. The western sky's a screen
Of faintest blue pierced by a single point
Of silvery light. It is the evening star,
The goddess that pursues the fleeing god,
Venus herself, whose softly glistening orb
So oft has steeped my mind in wistful awe.
And to my breast comes peace.

O beauteous star!
O light so passionate and yet so pure!
If from thy rays my eye again may draw
A rapturous feast; if briefly lingering
I may once more adore thy radiance:
Then will my soul, from darkness freed, forget
All it has lost or lacked or missed. Then will
My way no more appear so long and lone.
Then will with singing feet and sated heart
I take the road that turns and disappears
A day or an eternity ahead.



Northern Afternoon

By HELEN POTEAT STALLINGS

Today the quiet earth dreams
 In her mid-winter slumber.
 She has sighed long and softly.
 The clay of the road is wet;
 Lazily through a mist
 Sun is shining.
 Three white birches stand out against
 The dark forest border.
 I stop to lean on an orchard wall.
 A man is pruning an apple tree,
 His saw sings
 And a dove mourns in a distant cote.
 Sheep stand silently against the warm barn.
 Scent of new turned manure
 And a field of frozen cabbage
 Like round rotten skulls.
 You lift your head at me, red cart horse,
 Do you too smell the spring?

Spring Warning

By NEWMAN I. WHITE

Clais, today we see the breath-of-spring
 Wreathing its stems with waxen gold and white,
 And bridal-wreath's pale diffidence, half in fright,
 Timidly take the lawn; we feel the sting
 Of scarlet beauty in that smoldering thing,
 Fire-in-the-bush; then, warmly moist, the night
 Brings honey-suckle breath, and frequent, slight
 Half noticed sounds;—but when sharp voices fling
 Far, far abroad what Aristophanes
 Derided long ago—that shallow, shrill
 High-palpitant frog-boast from a hidden spot—
 Step gently Clais, lest we frighten these
 Bold kin of ours, claiming no frost shall kill,
 Hymning a beauty that perceives them not.

Music

From the French of Fernand Mazade

By MAY FOLWELL HOISINGTON

Around us now, as evenings darken,
Or mornings bring less early light,
From latticed leafage, day or night,
No more cicadas may we hearken
And nightingales again take flight.

Bereft of music, gloom may seize us;
So I have loosed from fancy's net
A flock of birds in rose and jet,
Whose singing company may please us
When Pan-pipes to our lips are set.

To hearts grown dark with sorrow's fretting,
They sing of all the pleasing fears
Of loving that must end in tears,
The vanity of all regretting . . .
The sweetness of our souvenirs.

July Night

By MAY FOLWELL HOISINGTON

Are they meteor stars,
Or fireflies rising and falling
Against the bars
Of this azure night?
What murmur sounds, as a calling
Of souls in flight?
The Swan's spread wings
In the zenith are hovering, shawling
All earthly things.
Vega's blue eye
Watches the Circus-troop crawling
Across the sky,
Where firefly-stars are falling.

Kin

By ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

By mullein leaves that mimic cloth,
 Brocades woven by the moth,
 Dark-lanterns of the fireflies,
 Beasts at night with jewelled eyes,
 Bees that pander for the flowers,
 Leaves inclined in prayer for showers,
 Euclid proven by the bees,
 The calendars in boles of trees,
 Sagas written in the rocks,
 Male pompousness in strutting cocks
 Liquid in a sky-green shell
 Warmed by feathers made so well
 That they make it move and be
 A sure prey for mortality—
 By the butterfly's cast skin,
 Men see everywhere their kin.

Autumn Occurrence

By DAVID CORNEL DEJONG

Yes, this was like a severed leaf
 And its falter downward.
 Did you note the flown-out eyes
 Of Sara from sea-lipped Danzig
 Balance that mauve one midway a while,
 Before its landing pierced her?

You know, she sought you, with that
 Teethy smile, eyes run over,
 And those pongeed hips, when
 The gilded clock from its squatted tower
 Shook downward noise of a finished hour
 And a rain of heavy after-thoughts.

This was leaflike. Even the thudded drum
 With the, "I come Jesus, Give light Jesus!"
 Seeped through the ribald gloom,
 Mist-like, dragging leaf after leaf,
 Till too much aware of one more leaf in fall,
 We remembered Anselm, Turretin and Paul,
 In sane worded speech and nearly brittle calm.

Poor kid—"I said this lithurgy was purged,
 And sacramental grace. . . ." She's turned down Adams St.
 You know, there's something reverent, too
 Balmy in the soaped guy's smile,
 And he has turned the corner too. My God,
 There's something shaking in that tune—"Jesus
 I come,"—that leaves no crisping leaves alone.

Walking this way, riveted to Colton Street,
 Entering and passing shadows, gives the thought
 Of things unfinished, things over-done, open courtyards
 Where the sun compelled to ripening,
 And the alien smell of things in fall.
 "Did you mark her lips, moistly thin,
 And the sea she heard greyly, when
 The bell died out?" Here too, are many leaves.
 Here too the wind comes sharp.



Crying as Gulls Cry

By DAVID CORNEL DEJONG

In the voices on rivers, the sky past willows,
 Where leaves turn white side to the sun,
 And two heifers caper, wind-wild
 In a meadow, there my thoughts flow,
 As a stream reluctant through grasses,
 Half-forgetting its onward course through a pool
 With the poising of bitterns. Then a fear
 Of the soul's liveness in silence
 Stirs up a startled cry to the heavens;
 Or like a river, from dashing on boulders,
 It creaks scared laughter through rushes,
 On to a wideness with no silence.
 Waver of rain, tremble of cock-cries,
 Flagging of wind in the spruces,
 And feet of children on hillsides,
 Urge a cry, like a gull's cry
 On seas too silent.



Rhythm of Madness

By J. B. CLARK

Drums beating dimly through the darkness,
Through the stillness of the jungle;
Tom-toms thumping in a clearing,
Bursting from the eerie blackness,
Pounding from the endless jungle.
Dully vibrant, booming ever,
Sounding o'er the waste of vastness,
Pounding more its ceaseless doom.

Greasy throats of savage blackmen
Shining in a golden moonlight,
Glistening o'er a bubbling caldron.
Hideous faces painted madly—
Leering eyes gleaming wildly—
Blood-stained lips twitching, screaming.
Brutal pounding of the tom-toms,
Fatal sounding of the tom-toms.

Rejuvenation

By TOM CARRIGER

Cool are the winds of the dawn
And fresh the awakening flowers
Bright are the sun's first beams
And gay the first bird song
Sweet are the early hours.

Aye, quick is the skip of the dawn's first child
With buoyancy and hope in her eyes
Strong with light yet mild
'Tis well the dawn so often comes.
'Tis well.

City Morning

By RAVEN I. McDAVID, JR.

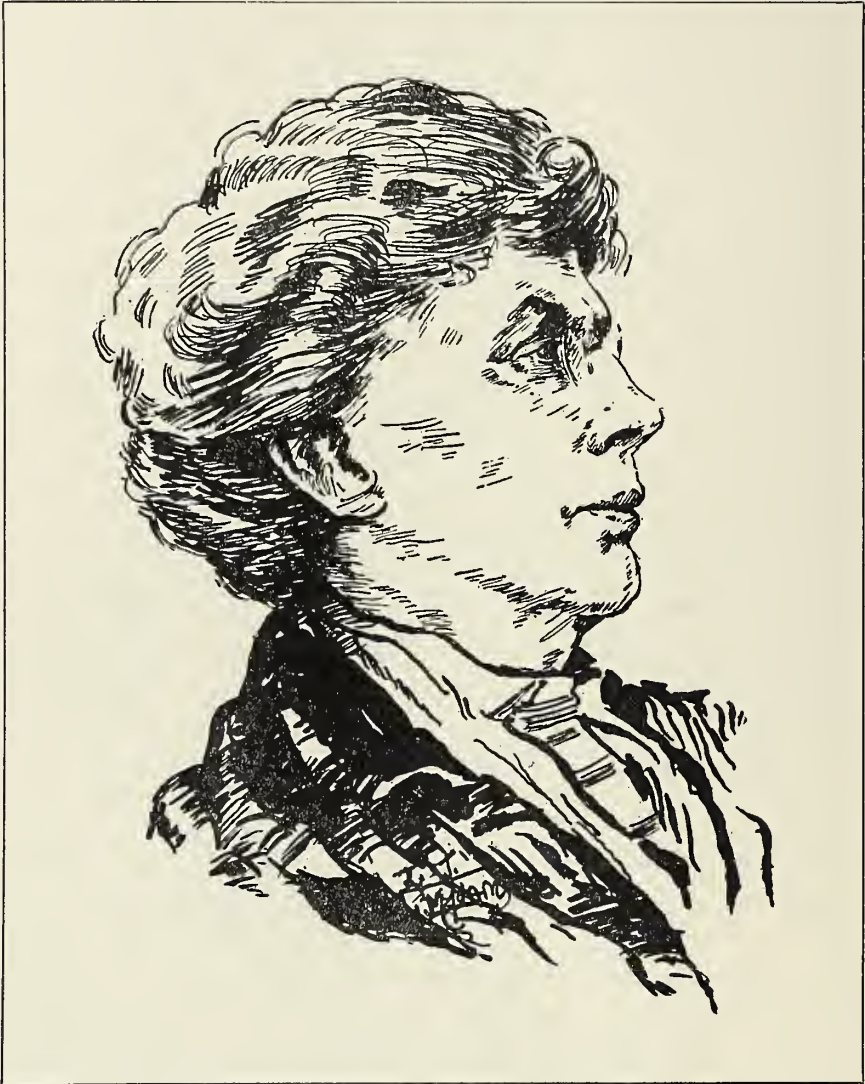
Pale glow behind clustered towers—
 Flashing of a gilded dome above
 Nests of dirty tenements—
 Bits of harbor fog penetrate
 Canyon-like streets.
 Clanging trolleys—shrieking brakes—
 Steady hum of factories—
 Chimes in the distance—unnoticed—
 Discordant whistles scream
 And summon workers to their daily toil.

Age

By TOM CARRIGER

Brown and dully curling,
 What had been gold and red
 Before that glossy green;
 Now
 Blown on curving track
 Dying or dead
 It floats through a crack
 In the barn
 And rustles in a corner.

 The hand of the milker shakes
 And breaks the steady stream
 Of milk;
 She too was once fresh and gold,
 Fit for silk
 Her hair now glistens white
 In the staring sun;
 She shivers: the blast
 That killed the leaf chills her,
 She quivers
 Head down near the ground
 The sun stares on—
 Non aghast.



AGNES REPPLIER

BOOKS

"Americans Never Have Enough of One Another"

Times and Tendencies. By Agnes Repplier. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. Pp. 227. 1931. \$2.00.

Miss Repplier is a superior essayist. What she writes is always worth reading, but unfortunately in her last collection of essays she has gone to subjects which have long since been worn threadbare.

Mencken and Nathan have made just about every devastating statement that can be made about the thousand different aspects of American culture and life. The American people have been characterized more frequently (because more easily) than the people of any nation on earth today. Even with her diverse peoples, and cultures, and religions there is some possibility of exhaustion of characterizations.

An essay in point in Miss Repplier's book is one called *The American Takes a Holiday*. A quotation for the essay she selects from Abbé Dimnet: *Americans never have enough of one another*. At great length she describes a Shriner's convention in Philadelphia in 1926, at which there were some two hundred thousand present. "They seemed to the crowded-out Philadelphian to be at least two millions." She describes with her real and stinging wit this crowd-loving, sweating, drinking mob who had gathered for the realization or furtherance of their purpose (whatever the Shriner's purpose may be), esoteric, though she grants noble. They sang, they paraded, they waved the American flag, they met, and they spoke, little aware that the sophisticated Miss Repplier was watching from a curtained window. And so have the Kiwanians, the Elks, the Knights of Pythias, the Knights of Columbus, the prohibitionists, the reformers, the Babbitts, the clergymen, and the educators been subjected to similar scrutiny and ridicule. The poor people are at a loss as to how they shall defend themselves. How many of our contemporary essayists have not with delightful complacency referred to the Kiwanian and his ideals? The sarcasm wasted on him has for a long while been platitudinous. Perhaps, after all, there is something about him more vital, more pertinent to lasting interest, than the superficial and trite descriptions of his ideals and his place in the complex American pattern seem to imply. At least this is true from the standpoint of literature.

Miss Repplier looks with one eye upon the aloof and sedate ghost of Henry James and with the other on the American people. With those ludicrously incongruous visions in her mind she has written most of these essays.

Yet it is unjust to her as an essayist to speak only of her unhappy selection of subjects. Though *The Fireside Sphinx* and *Mère Marie of the Ursulines* are clearly more in her province in literature, she has maintained in *Times and Tendencies* a style that is almost incomparable among contemporary American essayists. With the exception of too frequent obtrusions of quotations and references in some of her essays, most of them are marked by wit, humor, and balance.

OVID W. PIERCE, JR.

A Valuable Contribution

American Writers on American Literature. By Thirty-seven Contemporary Writers. Edited by John Macy. New York: Horace Liveright, Inc. [1931.] xxii, 539 pp. \$5.00.

"The idea of this book," says the general editor, "originated in a dissatisfaction and a hope. The dissatisfaction was a sense of the inadequacy of most books which attempt to deal with American literature from its beginnings to the present time." Every student of the subject, I am sure, would agree with Mr. Macy as to the inadequacy of all existing accounts, even Parrington's and Mr. Macy's own *The Spirit of American Literature*, which is still extremely readable after fifteen years or more. Mr. Macy is right, too, in saying, "The difficulty with a literary history written by one author is that it is almost impossible for a man to know both ends and the middle of even so brief a literature as that of America." Mr. Macy, having tried and rejected the one method (he once wrote *The Story of the World's Literature*), now tries the other. "If the whole territory cannot be covered by one man," he says, "it can be parceled out to a company of surveyors, a section to each." He condemns the standard symposium, *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, much of it now out of date and originally written before there was much serious work done on the subject. Mr. Macy's objection to the still indispensable *C. H. A. L.* is that "The roll of contributors reads like that of a college faculty." He has endeavored to bring together thirty-seven living writers" who approach literature primarily from a literary point of view" and who "regard criticism as an act of creation."

The dilemma of the American literary historian is a very real one. The professor may know his subject, but only too often he is not a critic and usually he cannot write well. But if we reject the scholar, we fall into the hands of the journalistic critic, who may be able to write entertainingly but usually lacks a thorough knowledge of the subject and may be no better critic than the professor. One is somewhat surprised to note that half of Mr. Macy's collaborators are or have been professors and, furthermore, that the professors have written most of the better chapters. I am inclined to think that Professor

Howard Mumford Jones's "Longfellow" is the best chapter in the book, although William Allen White's "Fiction of the Eighties and Nineties" seems a close second.

In some instances I am puzzled by Mr. Macy's selection of his collaborators. Why, instead of assigning Poe to Edwin Markham, did he not call in Hervey Allen, who is a writer of decided merit as well as the author of the best recent life of Poe? Why pass over three or four notable authorities on Cooper and assign the subject to Alfred Stanford, who may be an authority on the sea but who does not know the work already done on Cooper? Why give Lincoln, not to Carl Sandburg, the logical man, but to a professor of journalism at Columbia? Why assign Thoreau to Gilbert Seldes, Hawthorne to Louis Bromfield, or Emerson to Henry Hazlitt?

Why, furthermore, should there be chapters on Whittier and Holmes and none on Bryant? Why should there be a chapter on Henry Adams and none on Bret Harte? Why a chapter on New England Stories and none on those of the South or the Middle West? Indeed, except for the chapters on Mark Twain and Literature on the Pacific Coast, Southern and Western writers are hardly represented at all. Is this approaching American literature from a modern point of view? Hamlin Garland's interesting chapter on Howells is almost Victorian in its approach; it seems singularly out of place immediately following C. Hartley Grattan's thoroughly modern chapter on Mark Twain.

Thus far I have judged the book by something like an ideal standard—such as Mr. Macy suggests in his introduction. As a matter of fact, while very far short of the ideal, the book is a valuable contribution: it is readable and it is stimulating. Many of the chapters make one want to sit down and read or re-read *Moby Dick*, *The Scarlet Letter*, or *Daisy Miller*, or dip into things he has never read, such as those mentioned in Mrs. Mary Austin's chapter on Aboriginal American Literature or Jacob C. Rich's on Yiddish Literature. (I wonder, however, why there are no chapters upon the French literature of Louisiana or the Spanish literature of the Southwest.) For the discriminating reader, Mr. Macy's symposium is a useful and enjoyable book.

JAY B. HUBBELL.



Worthy Treatment of a Neglected Subject

The Periodicals of American Transcendentalism. By Clarence L. F. Gohdes. Durham, N. C.: The Duke University Press. 1931. vii, 264 pp. \$3.50.

In his introduction Dr. Gohdes gives the clearest and most illuminating brief account of New England Transcendentalism I have found. I quote a paragraph:

"In the opinion of the present writer, transcendentalism was not primarily a philosophy or a reform movement: it was a mental and spiritual attitude. Essentially, it sought to find the source of all truth within the nature of man. Where the intellect failed to supply the necessary grounds of knowledge, "the soul," or spiritual intuition, came to the rescue. Although there was considerable variation in the degree to which the transcendentalists exalted intuition over sense, all of them were potentially mystics. The chief manifestation of transcendentalism was in the sphere of religion. Indeed, transcendentalism in the narrower sense might be defined as Unitarianism in the process of "getting religion."

Dr. Gohdes's book deals with an important but hitherto neglected aspect of the work of Emerson and other Transcendentalists. His thorough study of ten Transcendental periodicals throws light upon the activities of both major and minor figures. In an appendix he gives two hitherto uncollected Emerson items of some importance. The book, except for the introduction, is not for the general reader; it should, however, interest not only students of American literature but also those concerned with philosophy, religion, or the history of American magazines. Much of the earlier work of scholars in the field of American literature will sooner or later have to be done over. It will be long, however, before Dr. Gohdes's careful study will be superseded.

JAY B. HUBBELL.

A Frenchman's Interpretation of Our National Hero

George Washington, Republican Aristocrat. By Bernard Faÿ. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1931. Pp. xvi, 286. Frontispiece and seven illustrations and maps. \$4.00.

With recollections of *Benjamin Franklin* still vivid in his mind, the reader will approach this second biography by Mr. Faÿ with the keenest anticipation. He will expect a sound interpretation, based on long and thorough research in the innumerable sources of information available on the life and time of George Washington; and perhaps the size and weight of the volume will impel him to delay attacking the book until he can accumulate sufficient time to negotiate the formidable work without interruption. He will be deceived, in part, however; for the heaviness of the volume consists exclusively in the weight of the paper used. The style is deft and light, often brilliant, and

always pleasing. The book reads with the accumulating intensity of a well written novel and with equal entertainment. The occasional footnote is hidden unobtrusively in the recesses of an appendix and the paraphernalia of research is reduced to a minimum. Instead of a scholarly attempt to throw new light on a legendary hero of American history, this biography reveals itself to be a swiftly moving, interpretative sketch of George Washington by a brilliant Frenchman.

The author, in his preface, states quite frankly that since investigation has already been carried as far as possible, he intends to proffer a balance-sheet, an interpretation of Washington as a leader of mankind, as a new type of character, encompassed by his silence and by the Universe, as a republican aristocrat.

In pursuit of his aim, Mr. Faÿ begins his interpretation by recounting the origins of the family dynasty in England where the social status was neither too high nor too low; the emigration to Virginia and the founding of the dynasty in the colony; the sudden rise to prominence under John Washington; the birth of George as a younger son of a far too numerous family; and the extraordinary luck by which he rose from the position of a landless youth, rather stolid and unprepossessing, to the ownership of large estates and the leadership of one of the most prominent families in the feudal aristocracy of Virginia. Luck, his social position, and economic interests made him the logical leader of the Virginia aristocracy in 1853 when the expansion of the colony westward was threatened by the Indians and the French. The failure of his first military campaign wherein he was led to confess the assassination of a French emissary bearing despatches served only to enhance him in the esteem of the Virginians. As the inarticulate embodiment of the point of view of the aristocracy of that colony, he became the symbol, the leader behind whom rallied the property owners, the wealthy, the aristocrats of all the colonies.

The French and Indian War was the ladder by which he ascended, hesitantly and unwillingly, to the leadership of the thirteen colonies in 1776. Unhampered by affiliation with any political group or by the ghosts of opinions uttered in the argumentative decade preceding the Declaration of Independence, he served as the imposing, austere embodiment of the colonial aristocracy arrayed against the English aristocracy led by a king obsessed with delusions of divine right power. As such, he was the logical leader of aristocrats bent on establishing a republic. His obstinacy, patience, capacity for organization, and luck carried him, and the colonies with him, through the trying years between 1776 and 1783. When in 1787-88 the new constitution was adopted, it was inevitable that, surrounded by the property owners who organized to capture the government, he should be chosen as the first president.

One is inclined to wonder, after reading Mr. Faÿ's interpretation, just wherein lay the greatness of Washington. Certainly it did not rest in the brilliancy of his ideas, the miracle of his military triumphs, or the ability to inspire love and devotion, for in none of these things did he excel. Taciturn in speech, moderately educated, and rigidly adherent to his *Rules of Conduct and Politeness*, he was a landowner endowed with the conservatism of his class. Perhaps his greatness lay in the fact that he was the most perfect embodiment of the qualities typical of that aristocracy which directed events in the colonies between 1750 and 1800.

The reader will have to pardon a tendency toward exaggeration evidenced in various parts of the book. It is difficult to believe, for instance, that in 1755 "the astonished universe had its eyes fastened upon Virginia," or that "the newspapers of the entire world recorded" the fact that Washington had been appointed commander-in-chief of the Virginia forces in August of the same year. Moreover, one is led to believe that the cataclysm of the Seven Years' War traced its origins to the activity of Washington, whereas that conflict was the culmination of a century-old contest between England and France. The French and Indian War was only a phase, though doubtless an important phase, of a larger movement. The traditional characterization of the Duke of Newcastle is presented by the author who fails to understand the complicated situation existing in English politics after 1760, and one might wish that more justice could be rendered that much maligned, harassed, and powerless Continental Congress which labored so hard against the most hopeless odds imposed by the sovereign states organized after 1775, not the least recalcitrant among them being Washington's own Virginia.

One passage, at least, must be quoted to demonstrate the delightful style maintained throughout the book. Washington met Sally Cary in 1748; . . . she was tall and willowy, not as beautiful as she was charming in her proud way; her gaze was direct and penetrating, her words just and profound; she was utterly different from all women George Washington had up to then found attractive. She was eighteen years old and had just married the young officer's closest friend, George William Fairfax of Belvoir, whose father had been Washington's affectionate protector. All the Fairfaxes were his friends but Sally was dearer to him than all the Fairfaxes put together. He saw her, and loved her at first sight, and gave himself to her unresistingly, but without abandon. He loved her all his life, though quite sensibly he married the "young, pleasant, plump, and rich little widow" Martha Custis, who brought him two children and an estate worth two hundred thousand dollars. Thus Washington followed the custom of the Virginia of his day, which decreed that a "marriage in an important family" was "much more of a public responsibility than a personal pleasure."

Doubtless there will be loyal Virginians who will protest some of the points presented by the author, his characterization of the pre-Revolutionary clergy, for instance, but it is undeniable that this interpretation of an American hero by a brilliant Frenchman is fascinating reading.

ALAN K. MANCHESTER.

Heather and Thistle in Tudor England

Frail Anne Boleyn. By Benedict Fitzpatrick. New York: Lincoln MacVeagh, The Dial Press, Inc. 318 pp. \$3.50. 1931.

The dramatic story of the rise and fall of Anne Boleyn, second of the six wives of Henry VIII, has been told many times. Like the idyl of David and Bathsheba, the love cycle between Anne and Henry has in it qualities of tragic endurance. In explanation of the purpose behind the writing of a new version of the life of "this most tragic of queens" Mr. Fitzpatrick says that "his chief object has been to rescue from the mountainous accumulation of original papers, and political treatises founded on them, the living personal forces in an affair of the heart that had unparalleled effects on history". With this thesis in mind the author proceeds to recount the growing dissatisfaction experienced by Henry with his queen, Katharine of Aragon, whose defects as a royal spouse were but the physical reflection of her husband's liberal life. Against this well known picture of the king's domestic affairs Mr. Fitzpatrick places anew the accounts of Henry's amours with Mary Boleyn, sister of Anne, and with others of the court. Gradually he recreates the pattern into which Anne herself fitted, a mistress, yet not a mistress, using the facts, as he sees them, to intimate the sincerity of her desire to have the name as well as the position of queen. Influenced by this belief in his subject, the author devotes the most of his book to an account of Anne's long battle to win Cardinal Wolsey, to subdue Katharine, and to hoodwink Pope Clement into giving Henry a divorce, leaving the last few pages for a record of her doubtful victory and death.

Frail Anne Boleyn is written, with certain modifications, in what could once have been called the "new" manner. Though Mr. Fitzpatrick is careful to state that there is "no invented dialogue", and that "Conversations, letters, speeches, incidents, quotations have been taken from contemporary records" the burden of factual proof is still upon him because in no case has he given direct information as to sources, save only that his "principal source has of course been the priceless volumes of *Letters and Papers* edited by Brewer and Gairdner." These strictures upon the methods pursued in the writing of the book are not to be taken as unkind criticism, but merely as evidence of the type of biography under consideration. The average lay reader does not

require that historical biography should be loaded with cumbersome foot-notes checking word upon word in the fashion demanded by a scholarly historian, and for his practical purposes, entertainment coupled with instruction, the less exacting standards are more than satisfactory. Accepted under such limitations *Frail Anne Boleyn* makes good reading. Nevertheless, Mr. Fitzpatrick has not even within the limits of its class produced a perfect biography.

The romantic features of "frail" Anne's career are the stumbling blocks in the way. It is to be granted that the vivacious character of the mother of Queen Elizabeth opens full channels for release of a rich imagination. She frequented a court where life was both deep and swift, and where wishes could be translated into thoughts and thoughts into actions. Faced with the prospect of transcribing the heady currents of sixteenth century royal society Mr. Fitzpatrick lets his pen run away with him. His descriptions of pomp and circumstance are rather too ornate, but he sins most of all in his attempts to recapture the spirit of the love trysts between Anne and her Tudor lover. Professors of English rightly call such overdone spots of fine writing "purple patches". More often met with in poetry they can there be tolerated, or at least skipped, but in a biographical work they have no proper place. At times in the present instance, when speaking of the sorrowful Katharine, or the yet more sorrowful Anne as she faces the trap prepared for her by Jane Seymour, such highly emotional writing seems not out of place. Yet the whole effect is one of cheapness, a cheapness which cannot be glossed over by an otherwise meticulous use of the rules of rhetoric.

THOMAS J. SHAW, JR.

Lovely Woman Stooped to Folly

My Sister's Story. By Michael Ossorgin. New York: The Dial Press. Pp. 235. \$2.00.

"When lovely woman"—so begins Goldsmith's famous stanza ending with that lethal prescription which we all must take, a bit of advice as valuable as most prescriptions, medical or philosophical.

Lovely woman, Ossorgin's sister Katya, stooped to folly according to the best dictates of man-made society. She married a man much older than herself, one of these "grand catches" who can give a woman money, position, children, ease—everything but fidelity, freedom, and peace of mind. She gave up a career as a musician; later she took a course in architecture and gave up architecture in its turn. She devoted herself to her husband in his hateful, ugly last days; then she became absorbed in the education of her children. Came death's untimely frost—and finis!

The story is a delicate objective presentation of what one might call the usual wasteful and painful adjustments and sacrifices which constitute the

pleasant lot of the so-called sheltered woman. The author in the person of Katya's brother gives us the story with adequate detail, in a gentle Turgenev mood. We are struck especially by one of his concluding paragraphs containing the words: "Nowadays everything is open and accessible to a woman; there is no reason why her life should go to pieces just because the husband she does not love is not faithful to her, or because the man by whom she is attracted does not resemble the hero of her dreams."

And where is this statement true? Surely not in the United States where it is still possible for a martinet in government service to print in a reputable magazine an article—serious and logical by intention at any rate—tracing the whole phenomenon of the depression to the ill-advised admission of women to paid occupations!

MARIE UPDIKE WHITE.

Black Man of Memory

Charcoal and Chalk. By Virginia Taylor McCormick. Norfolk: Atlantic Coast Co. 1931. \$2.00.

This small volume is one of personalities rather than portraits. Mrs. McCormick presents the negro sympathetically, as friends of her childhood, remembered with the warmest and kindest of feelings. It is a pleasure to see this subject treated by one who is sure of her material, after the many unsuccessful attempts at negro portraiture by those who are not so familiar with the race as individuals.

However, the author seems, at times, to be hampered by the superabundance of her recollections. Because of her enthusiasm for her subject she is unable to subordinate any of the personal elements which are so vivid and appear so essential to her; and some of the sketches, as a consequence, seem a little crowded and ragged. But this is of minor importance when considered in the light of her noteworthy achievement of combining the negro dialect, the negro peculiarities, and the negro mind into a series of definite portrayals.

ELIZABETH BULLUCK.

Poetry Inspired by Sheer Artistry

Radio to Daedalus. By Virginia Taylor McCormick. Norfolk: Atlantic Coast Printing Co. 1931. \$2.00.

This volume of verse represents seven years of Mrs. McCormick's best work, and there has been much growth in her technique and feeling since her last volume in 1924.

She is a real poet with the fine exaggeration and discrimination of the artist. Swift and sure in seizing the vital elements and representing them charmingly, without ornateness and obvious embellishments, she is most happy in her genius and portrait poems. One of the most popular, and perhaps the most representative of her artist's eye for essentials and her artist's vivid and dramatic conception of the apparently common-place is:

THE SNOB

She knew a Lord: "I met him once, my dear,
In London," and her eyes shone at the thought,
"And Brion So and So, a dashing peer,"
A young lieutenant whose grandfather fought
At Flander Field had led her out to dance.
She had a button that adorned a king,
A ribbon from a Chevalice of France,
Gossip to last you through an evening.
Her name sweet fashions charity had graced,
Yet sick and beggared passed her unaware;
No poor relation ever could have faced
Her jeweled lorgnon with its icy stare.
Now she is dead she greets Christ with a nod;
He was a carpenter, but she knows God.

Though the genre and portrait poems have received the widest acclaim from the critics, her lyric and sonnet forms are beautiful and worthy of the artist. They are not as subjective in treatment as are these forms as portrayed by Edna St. Vincent Millay, Dorothy Parker, and some of the other modern poets—a result, perhaps, of her particular aptitude for the other types. But each of these springs from a real emotional experience, and represents much beauty and poignant feeling. An occasional figure will strike the reader and remain in his memory because of its cleverness and artistic treatment. There is a stanza from *Pierette*:

With skilful hands the juggler Night
Hides hills and fields below his gown;
Cuts in his pockets herds of sheep,
Swallows the belfry, then the town.

ELIZABETH BULLUCK.

A Humorist Abroad

Trouble in the Balkans. By W. O. McGeehan. New York City: Lincoln MacVeagh, The Dial Press. \$2.50.

There are three types of travel books published now; one prepared to serve as a guide for travellers, telling them where to go and what to see, another written to describe wonders in distant lands, and a third meant to make money and some sort of fame for the author by giving an enumeration of the drinks of Europe and using as much slang as possible. *Trouble in the Balkans* is a perfect example of the third type. If one can endure the reference in every paragraph to his tender "dogs" and his never failing reference to his wife as "the lady who is driving me" one can have some sympathy with the author in his mourning over the sight of ruins and the taste of bad foods and enjoy to some extent his very bald humor. Mr. McGeehan and "the lady who was driving him" visited France, Italy, the Balkans, Greece, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Germany. The introduction to his book, written after his return to this country, states that the answer to George Sand's question, "Why travel?" is "to find more unique and distant discomforts". He describes the discomforts of motoring through the mountains and swamps of the Balkans and Greece after the more cheerful days in France and Italy. The chapter on Paris is a satire on boxing in that city and New York. His comment summing up France and Italy is "The French peasants fished because there were no fish (for sport pure and simple) and the Italian peasants did not fish because there were no fish. And yet, somebody insisted that the French were realists and the Italian romanticists."

To one who has seen the burdens the peasant women of Europe carry, the following sentences are poignant: "Further north, where men are still men, the women carry the heavy freight, but among the Croats, who seem to have softened up recently, the donkeys are forced to carry most of the freight. They even are made to carry their own hay. The Croatian women carry practically nothing excepting light stuff like sewing machines, mattresses, logs and other household furnishings." After trying some of the "native dishes" in various small towns, the author remarks: "I am off these quaint little towns and these quaint little restaurants. Right now I would trade anything I have for a quaint little platter of ham and eggs." Another pertinent remark is: "These neighboring countries seem to know quite as little about each other as we do about the people in the next flat in New York.—Yet I find myself getting indignant because nobody in Jugo-slavia knows all the places in Albania and the first names of the traffic cops at the edges of the various towns." Anyone who wonders at our civilized habit of paying to see other people play instead of playing ourselves, will appreciate the following: "The wrestler of Montenegro threw back his head and upset three tables with his Gargantuan laughter. He

left the place roaring, 'He says they pay them for wrestling in America. What a good joke. I must tell that one to my woman.'"

All who have suffered in the customs of New York will sigh with sympathy at the experience in the examination in Albania: "Right then and there I began to feel that the Albanian customs service must have been trained in the Port of New York because they dumped out all of the personal garments of the lady who is driving me and rolled them around in the dust for awhile." Most people who have been in Europe during the past few years have suffered from having Russian Grand Duchesses as waitresses or nurses or dress-makers and will concur with the statement: "I cannot say that a grand duchess makes a good waitress." The custom of giving a percentage of what you have to each servant or employee in the hotels you visit is given very worthwhile mention in this book. Any traveller will enjoy that bit. "I know why the Persians never could land in Greece. The boys met them at the dock and claimed their percentages. When Cyrus figured what the landing fee would be he ordered the army back on his ships and returned to Persia. The runner from Marathon dropped dead from disappointment. He had claimed 10% of the expedition." You feel this way when you land, you know. The author's attitude towards travel and the theme of his book is condensed in the following two sentences: "My notion of seeing the important sights of Europe would be to go to Munich and look over the Hofbrauhaus, the Rathauskeller in Vienna and then push on to Pilsen in Czechoslovakia, where there must be some very impressive places."—"That is the way to travel: mix your ruins with your comforts, and seeing the various cradles of the different civilizations is not so tough." With the latter sentence all can surely agree. The drawings in the book, by Jules Halfant, add much to the pleasure of the reader.

MARY O. COWPER.

Negro Writers in Review

The Negro Author. By Vernon Loggins. Columbia University Press. New York City. 1932. \$5.00.

From among the doctoral dissertations prepared for the English Department at Columbia University, during the last decade, Vernon Loggins' *The Negro Author* has been judged of sufficient merit to be published in book form—more because of its value as being the first concise explorative and scholarly study of the field of consciously produced Negro literature than as a literary appreciation of the writings of the black race in America. The book is not an exhaustive study of the subject, nor does it aim to be more than a general survey of a field of American literature which literary historians almost without exception have neglected.

Mr. Loggins himself says that the field is productive of little that is truly artistic, but it extends far and wide, embracing in a way the entire struggle for the extinction of slavery, the Civil War, the reconstruction of the South, and the late nineteenth-century problem of racial adjustment; and the volume, *The Negro Author*, is the first extensive record of the Negro's struggle toward adequate expression through poetry, oratory, letter-writing, memoir-making, theological and sociological treatises, fiction, and the drama.

Viewed in the light of historical association, the field of Negro literature is indeed rich; and for literary associations it is equally interesting for the student to notice the correspondence in the trends of Negro literature—sometimes belated and often unconsciously imitative—to the great periods of the literature of the Caucasians. Chillis Wheatley, with her Classicism, Juppiter Hammon, with his Puritanism, Booker T. Washington, with his Liberalism, and Paul Lawrence Dunbar, with his Realism, are typical examples of how the Negro writer kept in step with the changing thought of literary conceptions.

In his orderly discussions of more than two hundred Negro authors, Mr. Loggins covers the period from 1760 to 1900, during which time the Negro reflects in his writings his change from an imitation of the theological thinking and writing of his white masters to a realization of himself as a personality, and of his race as a source for potential poetry and drama, as well as for social and economic problems.

The Negro Author is written in the textbook style—tiresome, perhaps, at times, but a sense of authority pervades it, and makes it worthwhile.

MARY HESTON MARTIN.

An Excellent Discussion on International Trade

James A. Thomas—*Trailing Trade a Million Miles*. Duke University Press. 1931. 314 pp. \$3.50.

This is a personal, practical book about international trade, written by one who has spent his entire life in studying and working out its problems. It has an appeal for several classes of readers, but especially for those who wish to embark upon a career in foreign trade and want to avoid the pitfalls along the way. It is rich in ideas and suggestions for these people. Common sense, honesty, adaptability, keeping continually on the job, and keeping up with changing economic conditions throughout the world are all necessary requirements for success in this work. The particular work of Mr. Thomas was to develop the Oriental and Australian markets for an American Tobacco Company. In this he was highly successful.

The author is a firm believer in international trade as an influence toward world peace and as an important factor in individual and national prosperity.

He wrote this book, he says, solely from the viewpoint of a "traveler and business man interested in the cultivation of good-will among different races, as well as in extending American markets." One can fathom from this that Mr. Thomas is not a strong believer in protective tariffs. "The principal cause of differences between peoples" he says "is the fact that they are not acquainted with each other." Foreign trade brings them together; and it is the work of the foreign representatives of business concerns—"good-will ambassadors"—to foster friendly relations so that trade may develop. A distinct line is drawn between the salesman who merely tries to sell his product—and probably fails—and the one who is patient enough to work and develop a market for his product by exchanging his product for one which the other country has and which we lack. A small beginning may thus lead to industries of great importance, enriching the people of both countries. In his enthusiasm for foreign trade the author, at times, seems to forget that trade that is just as important may be developed within a country which has a variety of climate and resources.

Some decided opinions are stated in various parts of the book. One is with respect to the effects of an invigorating climate upon the progress of peoples. This, and education, he sees as the two most important factors in the progress of the eastern United States and southeastern Canada.

Another disagrees with those who criticise the United States and Great Britain for the manner in which they have ruled certain colonial possessions. These countries, he thinks, have ruled exceedingly well. The government of India is "a great piece of work. It has been the pride of the British Empire for more than a century and still is."

Neither is he in accord with those who see an overpopulated world in the not too far distant future. The world's unused possibilities are described and methods for their development given. "I believe," he says "that world standards of living can be kept constantly advancing with the increase of the output of the world's industries."

The style of the book is informal, written as if the story were being told to some one. The narrative—as is inevitable in a book of its nature—is somewhat rambling but it is filled with numerous incidents, character sketches, and successful trade practices, and does not become monotonous. There seems to be an excellent selection of material.

CHAS. E. LANDON.

"Literature Corrective to American Life"

The Outlook for Literature. By Ashley H. Thorndike. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1931. 200 pp. \$1.50.

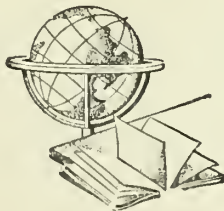
Professor Ashley Thorndike, a Shakespearean scholar and the general editor of a modern library series, is undisturbed by the struggle of the front-line critics in his observations of contemporary American literature and in his prophecies as to its future in the light of the "great tradition"—i.e., classical literature of Western Europe. In a series of closely related essays, Professor Thorndike views the important tendencies or movements in literature from the classical period of Greece to the modern American scene, and considers the paraphernalia of the machine age as the social background of the future state of letters. Unattached to schisms, cliques, and movements, he sees not only a growth in the quantity of our literary output but also an increasingly high quality of workmanship. In his rôle of prophet, he has gone to no end of trouble in compiling evidence and in proving his points.

His quiet predictions from his study window appear at times platitudinous and outmoded to modern day critics. However, his neither illuminating nor penetrating remarks are delightfully embellished with countless references to the writers and their works of art out of the Western tradition.

Of the twelve essays, "Readers," "Writers," "The Great Tradition," "Poetry," "Patterns," "Teaching," "Stories," "Belief and Behaviour," "Internationalism," "The Study of Literature," "The English Language," and "American Literature," the last one is perhaps the most interesting but disappointing. Of course, Professor Thorndike is unable to see what will actually happen in the next fifty years, but he is confident that literature will be a corrective to American life, that it will be less sex-ridden, and finally that it will be a vital influence on the next generation.

The value of Professor Thorndike's book of essays lies in the author's independent and fair treatment of his subject, his catholicity, and his remote point of view. He is never dogmatic. The essays are written in a broad and tolerant spirit.

DAVID K. JACKSON, JR.



"There Are Still Nightingales"

Special Hunger: The Tragedy of Keats. By George O'Neil. New York: Horace Liveright Inc. Pp. 329. \$2.50.

Here is the tragic drama of a man whose soul worshipped the beautiful and the fragile in life, yet could not endure the petty criticisms of envious jeerers. When everything seemed told of his genius, George O'Neil delves deepest into the man's soul and presents a dramatic revelation of Keats, the broken and pathetic poet whose matchless power of song flowered so fully and so briefly. Himself one of the most gifted of young modern poets, Mr. O'Neil has entered his own heart into this gripping exposure and has created, through a perfection of romantic reality, a new Keats—a tormented Keats, through whose eyes we can almost see the very beauty that inspired his art.

Emphasis is placed chiefly on the unfulfilled youth of Keats, although a brief section of the story is devoted with impressive economy to the poet's childhood. At once does Mr. O'Neil illustrate his own excellent fitness for his task. Only a perfect understander of a poet's heart could have put such words as he does into the speeches of the boy Keats. A dramatic instance must be noted. Keats, the child, attending his mother who lies ill by his side, gazes with rapt attention through an open window. The mother, noticing the boy's face, asks: "What makes you so quiet? What were you thinking of, son?" the childhood period ends with his answer. "There's a sparrow here on the window-sill."

The full force of the novel, however, lies in the next and final period of Keats's life; when he is so deeply moved by the spirit of his age and feels the enchantment of men like Wordsworth, Byron, and Shelley. Left an orphan early in life, he is compelled by a guardian, who never understands the inner yearning of the boy, to renounce all literary ambitions and pursue the study of surgery. Bowed down by ill health, devoted to the care of his brothers and sister, consumed by a burning and hopeless passion for Fanny Brawne, John Keats becomes the master of his own destiny and pours out his very soul into a poetry that can no longer be held chained to worldly manacles. How he endures endless poverty and carries on even briefly in the face of mocking critics makes a beautiful story of love and achievement. Ever present there are the companions of Keats—the really great of the Romantic Age. We see Wordsworth in the fading glory of his triumph; the wistful, rebellious Shelley looming brilliantly on the literary horizon; Byron, conceited and pompous, dictating from his kingly throne. We live the days of Keats, watching his every move, sharing his heartbreak and his pitifully few joys. Often we glance over his shoulder and read his poems as he pens them, and then we as one feel the glory and the power of his genius.

It was only fitting that John Keats, poet of man and of beauty, should have, through his eternal thought of another, renounced his one sustaining hope for life—his love for Fanny Brawne—and entered his frail, cough-wracked body into the final sleep.

J. B. CLARK.

An Inspired Charlatan

Joseph Smith and His Mormon Empire. By Harry M. Beardsley. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co. Pp. 402. \$4.00.

The career of Joseph Smith has long been a prototype for two forms of our cheap fiction. If he is considered as the honest mouthpiece of God, then his life is a perfect example of rags to riches, obscurity to endless fame, climaxed by a cruel martyrdom. If he is considered as a lascivious tool of the devil, then he is an equally good example of the old axiom that what a man sows that shall he also reap, and that the unrighteous man will come to no good end.

Joseph Smith and his Mormon Empire is the latest work calculated to determine the man's true status. In making this determination, the author, Harry M. Beardsley is careful not to draw any personal conclusions. In his preface he delicately evades a direct stand by blaming all Smith's conduct on fate in whose all powerful grasp the man was but "a puppet made to dance and posture by forces he seldom recognized and never understood."

The book itself, however, gives a far more decisive answer to the many speculations. Mr. Beardsley has been thorough in preparation for the biography. His large bibliography from which he makes numerous citations necessarily makes his work authoritative. From the biography, Joseph Smith emerges as a man extremely fond of living, and ingenious enough to enlist spiritual backing in all of his earthly conquests.

The author himself, I believe, has not worried at all about the righteousness or corruptness of his subject. Smith was an intensely interesting man. In days of hard drinking, swearing, and boisterous conduct, he drank the most, swore the loudest, and acted the most boisterous. He was a strong man and through his strength made himself the greatest leader of the period.

Mr. Beardsley has written his book in a readable manner. The work is crammed with incidents, yet the action is never hurried. Occasionally some rather queer sentence structure has been recorded, but the fault is a minor one. Here is a biography lacking the ponderous suggestions of deep scholarship and research; in all, a human document.

J. L. STEWART.

A New Dostoevsky

Dostoevsky: A New Biography. By Edward Hallett Carr. With a Preface by D. S. Mirsky. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. Pp. 324. \$3.50.

Dostoevsky the novelist, rather than Dostoevsky the philosopher, the psychologist, or the prophet is the theme of E. M. Carr's very excellent and much-needed biography. In the preface, written by D. S. Mirsky, the claim is advanced that the biographer "shuns the cheap and meretricious graces that have been made fashionable by a modern school of biographers." A reading of the biography will quickly convince one of the validity of the claim. Mr. Carr presents a veritable gold mine of facts, and presents them in an eminently readable manner.

Biographers of Dostoevsky antedating Mr. Carr have been handicapped by one of two weaknesses: either a paucity of biographical material, or, as in the case of Dostoevsky's daughter, a decided bias in favor of the man. Neither weakness is noticeable in Mr. Carr's work. With the Soviet revolution in 1917, and the death of the novelist's widow in 1919, a wealth of material was made available for the first time. It is with the use of this material that our present biographer has been able to draw a likeness of Dostoevsky which is, perhaps, more nearly true than any previous one that has been given to the world.

Mr. Carr sets out to strip Dostoevsky of any claim to greatness other than that of literary. This he quite effectively does. Beginning with Dostoevsky's youthful radical activities, which resulted in banishment to Siberia, and ending with his later days which culminated in his becoming a pillar of orthodox Christianity and political conservatism, Carr paints a picture of a befuddled, pathetic, and violently vacillating individual. Dostoevsky's most notable characteristic, however, was his dependence upon others. Insanely inprovident, he was constantly in need of guidance in practical matters. It was not until his marriage with Anna Grigorievna—his second wife—that any semblance of stability came into his life.

The influences which were responsible for Dostoevsky's political and moral credo are convincingly and thoroughly presented by Mr. Carr. Undoubtedly the most far-reaching of these influences was his imprisonment in the House of the Dead, a Russian penal colony in Central Siberia, where, in the midst of indescribable filth and misery, he remained for four years, emerging finally into the world an incurable epileptic with a prolific, but distorted mind. It was his experience in the House of the Dead that convinced him of the wisdom of political conservatism. And it was his constant association with criminals of every imaginable description which made anything other than abnormal men, morally and ethically, a rarity in Dostoevsky's novels from the period of *Crime and Punishment* to that of *The Brothers Karamazov*.

L. J. CLARK.

A New Play on an Old Theme

The Trial of Jeanne d'Arc and Other Plays. By Edward Garnett. With a foreword by John Galsworthy and hitherto unpublished letters from Joseph Conrad, E. M. Forster, W. H. Hudson, J. Forbes-Robertson, D. H. Lawrence, John Galsworthy, and Charles M. Doughty, with reference to the plays. New York: The Viking Press Inc. Pp. 1-(7-110)-304. 1931. \$3.00.

The Trial of Jeanne d'Arc was written by Mr. Garnett in 1911. In May, 1931, it was produced in The Art Theatre in London. This late reawakening of interest in Mr. Garnett's theme has given him opportunity to place side by side, in his introduction, criticisms from the pens of both the quick and the dead. Mr. Galsworthy speaks reluctantly, ostensibly because he was asked. The letters apropos of the play from D. H. Lawrence and Joseph Conrad contain more informal and more poignant observations. Both profess, however, that they are no critics. But each speaks warmly of Mr. Garnett's subtle characterizations of the priestly "fat flies" to whom Jeanne is given for trial.

This chronicle play on a subject which has been treated almost as variously as it has frequently shifts its study to the trial rather than to the life of Jeanne. This dramatic tragedy has its appeal for the historian as well as the dramatist. At any rate, it is the historian's approach that Mr. Garnett makes. For the most part he relies wholly upon authenticated fact. His authority is the famous *Process of Condemnation* and the *Process of Rehabilitation*—the exact records of the proceedings of the trials, which have been preserved in Latin translation. Yet the dramatist feels that what they conceal "is perhaps of no less import than what they reveal". Written from this point of view *The Trial* can never be a popular stage production.

The traditional dramatic scenes of Jeanne's life have been hastily passed over. And the final scene in which the flames leap about her as she utters the cry: "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus" is a failure. One feels that it must be got through with for the completion of the play. It is in his astute characterizations of the worldly, jealous, and greedy priests that Mr. Garnett has done creditable work. A woman is being tried for heresy; it is up to them as the apostles of God's faith on earth to exact punishment for sacrilege. They must act without compassion and mercy. Each has his own holy life to live in the good graces of the people and the Church. These dozen or more characters Mr. Garnett has drawn with commendable clarity. Each of the long-dead learned prelates has distinct identity and individual vitality.

Better plays have been written on Jeanne d'Arc; but no dramatist, perhaps, has made a keener interpretation of the intricate and long-suppressed proceedings which doomed Jeanne to death than has Mr. Garnett.

OID W. PIERCE, JR.

Human Wreckage

Hatter's Castle. By Archibald Joseph Cronin. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. Pp. 605. \$2.50.

Dr. Cronin's first novel has reached its fourth printing in a few months. The author has had a good practice in the West End of London, but has resigned it to carry on with his literary work. A man, just turned forty-five, has had his first attempt at fiction accepted by the first publisher to whom it was offered. This long novel of 605 pages was written in the short space of three months, when Dr. Cronin felt that he needed a rest from his medical practice. When he finished it, he had a strong urge to destroy it, but fortunately did not. In spite of its length *Hatter's Castle* has won acclaim and distinction for Dr. Cronin, a reception, which, I think is justified.

The action involves a period of five years, during which period the reader follows the disintegration of the character, home, and business of James Brodie, the hatter in the small town of Levenford. Brodie is the dominating character, and believes that if he intimidates every one with whom he comes in contact, he will become a leader. He is a man of tremendous physical strength, but has a slow and sluggish mind. Brodie is a man of hate and revenge as is Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights*. He hates his daughter Mary, kicking her out of his mad dwelling into a raging storm. In describing the wind in this storm Dr. Cronin writes: "The wind, like some gigantic orchestra, traversed madly the gamut of its compass. The deep diapason of the pipe organ mingled with the ready treble of clarionets; bugles shrilled against the bass of oboes; the wailing of violins, the clash of cymbals, the booming of drums were blended together into an unearthly cacophony of dissonance."

Hatter's Castle has the drama of Hardy, but lacks his poetic beauty of narration. Dr. Cronin uses to great advantage his background as a physician—that intangible fathoming of the workings of the human mind that doctors seem to have. One sees that Dr. Cronin is interested in people. The book has an excellent vocabulary, and the narrative moves along in a powerful, yet swift moving style. The interest of the reader is carried from one unforgettable scene to another, indeed one is inclined to use superlatives in speaking of this novel. The one great defect of this novel of more than 250,000 words is the lack of humor—what there is of humor is weak and thin like that of some college professors.

Dr. Cronin's first novel is worth reading, and worth comparing with other works of fiction. It is a significant contribution to English prose fiction. *Hatter's Castle* is the first novel to be chosen as the-book-of-the-month by the English Book Society.

ANDREAS J. DARLSON.

The Younger Generation

The Flesh Is Weak. By John Held, Jr. New York: The Vanguard Press. Pp. 1-244. \$2.00.

John Held, Jr. has been hailed as the greatest recorder of the lives and actions of the younger generation since the F. Scott Fitzgerald of 1920. Whether his earlier books justify this statement or not, I do not know. His field in *The Flesh Is Weak* is a very limited one, but in this field he writes with some insight.

The Flesh Is Weak is made up of a series of unconnected short stories. With the exception of the first skit, the author has written nothing about college life. His stories are nearly all about street car conductors, filling station operators and the unfortunate children of sordid parents.

Mr. Held's stories are uncomfortable; at times they are bitter. If they are accepted as authentic, they then form a powerful indictment of our social conditions. The author certainly does not evade any details in the unfolding of his plots, nor in his direct narration does he hesitate to record exactly what his characters would, in reality, say.

Two stories in *The Flesh Is Weak*, "The Holy Bonds", and "Penitentiary Bait", are superior to the others. These show the author at his best. The stories are undoubtedly true; and the second one exposes a social evil, concerning which little is said and nothing done to bring about its remedy.

The Flesh Is Weak is too short and of too narrow a field to be important. The author has no particular style in his writing: it is neither bad nor good. This criticism can be applied to the book, as well. Take it or leave it.

J. L. STEWART.

"A Man and His Wife"

Two People. By A. A. Milne. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co. 1931. Pp. 313. \$2.50.

Only one who has long been accustomed to creating living characters for the stage could so well portray two people of such sensitive character as Reginald and Sylvia Wellard, the central figures of Milne's first serious attempt at a novel. The characters of "Two People" are gentle-folk of present day England (as always Milne writes within his ability of that with which he is intimately acquainted); and we have more than a slight suspicion that Sylvia and Reginald are his wife and A. A. Milne himself.

The book is steeped in the quiet atmosphere which pervades the classics of Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Mrs. Gaskell. Westaways, which is to the Wellards a paradise second only to heaven (even an implied doubt of that), is a place of high stone walls, white stiles, apple orchards, rock gardens, long rolling sheep-cropped fields, cuckoos echoing in distant woods of "wild cherry,

wild plum and black thorn hung daintily white against the blue," of Aprils bringing "thrushes urgent in pear trees, bees visiting in the aubrietia," blue-bells, daffodils, and primroses.

Reginald Wellard spends much of his time contemplating the beauty of his Westaways—and its inhabitants and visitors. Milne possesses the faculty of making his characters tell you in sentences of perfect English just what is going on in their minds. Yet, so great is his art that his method is not obvious, and you are under the illusion that you yourself have such keen insight as to penetrate the souls of his characters.

The external plot is a mere frame for Milne's portraits of his subjects. A man named Reginald Wellard has a wife and a garden and has just written his first novel "Bindweed". To have his finger on the pulse of the public which is buying his book, he and his wife leave their garden for London. And when all business in connection with his book is transacted they return to their garden.

The real events in this book occur in the minds of the Wellards and their friends. Sylvia is equally as important a figure as Mr. Wellard, but Reginald is the chief puppet of the author in that it is mainly through him that the other characters live and grow. It is only in their relation to Reginald that we know the author's other brain children.

It is undoubtedly more difficult for an author to portray the soul of a woman than the soul of a man just as it requires more skill and keener insight for an authoress to delineate the character of a man than that of a woman. Lady Macbeth personifies unscrupulous ambition; Walpole's most powerfully drawn old lady is the embodiment of beauty-mad greed; but how shall one draw a lady whose most obvious and apparently chief characteristic is beauty (such an intangible thing), and still have a living breathing person when one is finished? An artist needs the finest of brushes to paint the delicate rather than vivid lines in Sylvia Wellard's character.

Perhaps man's innate love and appreciation of beauty might be said to be the keynote of the book: "To see beauty, to adore, to give expression to one's adoration, is there ecstasy to compare with it? If Heaven is all a garden and Sylvia, thought Reginald, how I shall give praise." After attempting the understanding of his own character, his wife's character, his wife's attraction for him, their love for each other as different from the love of other people for each other, Reginald discovers a final solution in beauty. The foundation of their love is beauty; the difference between the higher and lower planes of love lies in an appreciation of beauty; Sylvia's attraction for Reginald is beauty: "'stay beautiful, my sweet Sylvia.' 'I'll try, my darling. I expect it's what I'm for'."

KATHERINE LOUISE SAWYER.

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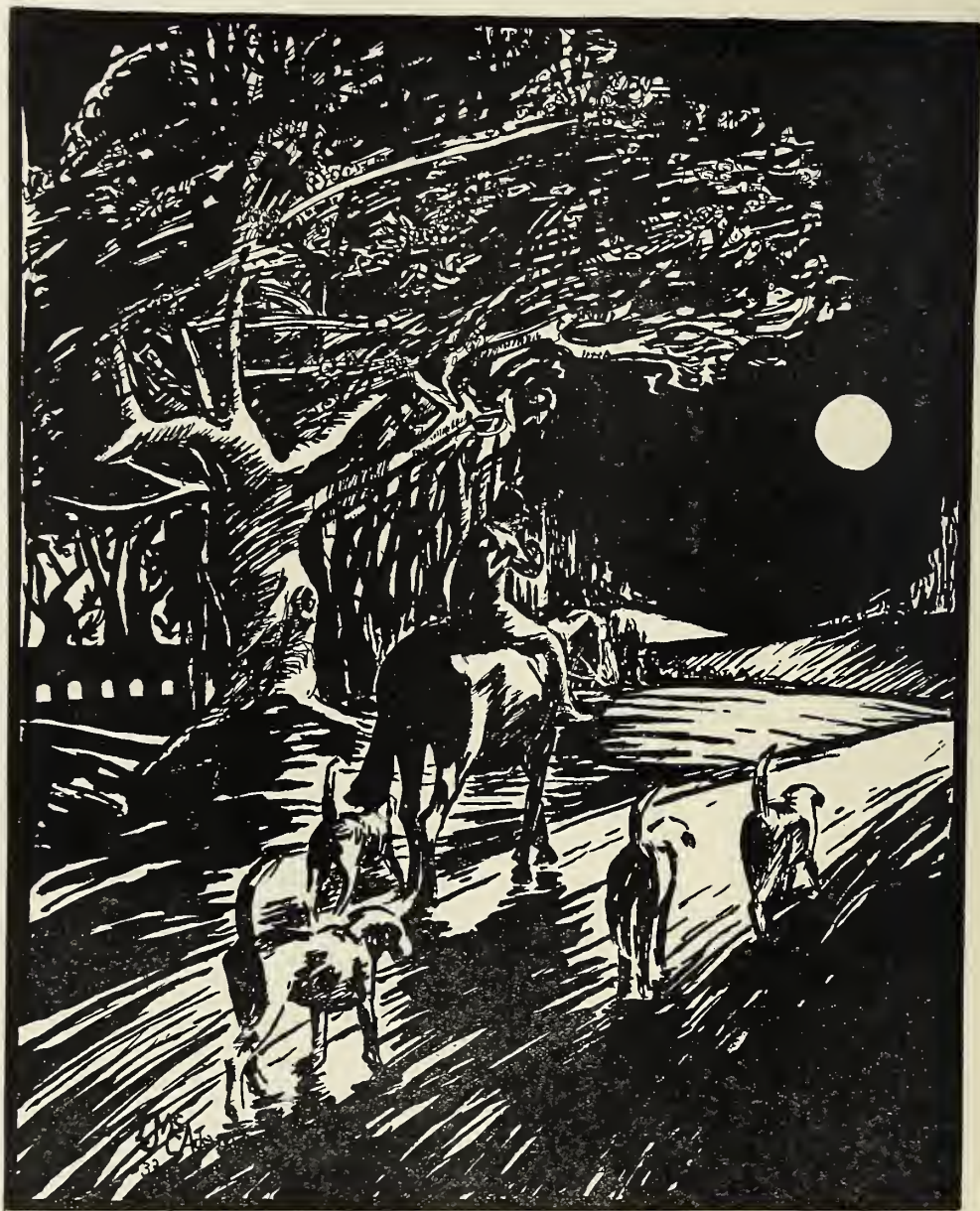
CONTENTS

	PAGE
Frontispiece	Laura Jean McAdams 4
<p>The sketches of Agnes Repplier and Lytton Strachey which appeared in the February issue were drawn by Miss McAdams.</p>	
Editorial	D. C. D. 5
<p>Mr. DeJong, who surveys culture at Duke for this issue, is a consistent contributor.</p>	
Aubade (<i>verse</i>)	R. P. Harriss 8
<p>Mr. Harriss edited one of the finest volumes of the ARCHIVE in 1925-26. He now lives in Paris as foreign correspondent for the New York <i>Herald-Tribune</i>.</p>	
The Prince of French Biographers: André Maurois	Cyril Clemens 9
<p>Mr. Clemens lives in Webster Groves, Missouri. Since 1927 he has been president of the International Mark Twain Society. He has lectured throughout America and Europe on Mark Twain; and has edited <i>Gold-Rush Days</i> and <i>Mark Twain Anecdotes</i>.</p>	
Will Rogers or Chic Sales?	Gay W. Allen 13
<p>Mr. Allen was formerly a member of the ARCHIVE staff. He was graduated from Duke in 1926, and is now teaching English at the University of Wisconsin.</p>	
Women of Aran (<i>verse</i>)	Edwin Björkman 18
<p>Mr. Björkman is a well known poet from Asheville, North Carolina. His poem, <i>Evening Star</i>, was published in the February issue.</p>	
A Southern Magazine: A Brief Sketch	David K. Jackson 19
<p>Mr. Jackson is a graduate student in English at Duke.</p>	

Book Reviews

<i>A Garland for John Donne</i>	Allan H. Gilbert 24
<p>Dr. Gilbert is professor of English at Duke University. He is the author of recognized works on Milton and Dante.</p>	
<i>These Restless Heads</i>	David Cornel DeJong 25

<i>Only Yesterday</i>	Christopher Roberts	27
<p>Professor Roberts is a member of the economic faculty of Duke University. This is his first contribution to the ARCHIVE.</p>		
<i>Our Changing Theatre</i>	A. T. West	27
<p>Mr. West is a member of the English faculty and director of dramatics at Duke. He is associate editor of <i>The Cue</i>, monthly publication of national Theta Alpha Phi, honorary dramatic fraternity.</p>		
<i>Harvest of Time</i>	J. B. Clark	28
<i>Albatross</i>	Louise Smith	29
<p>Miss Smith is a senior and a major student in English. This is her first appearance in the ARCHIVE.</p>		
<i>The Apes of God</i>	Louis J. Clark	29
<i>Comments from Readers and Contributors</i>		32



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EDITORIAL

About Culture at Duke

By DAVID CORNEL DEJONG

LET us come to the point at once. Let us even ignore the title. Frankly, there isn't any—culture, of course. Nor can one muster up hope that it lies hidden somewhere, no matter how easily hopes sprout from futility. We have our Gothic arches, towers, even embattlements, and from these, when very modern bells shrill, eager bodies—not too well dressed—stir promptly, imbibe the least modicum of learning and facts. Later they fill a few neatly measured hours dutifully with other facts, after that, nothing. Let us forget for once that there are athletics, dances, dates, and bull sessions. Strangely, we are concerned with culture, something we might possibly expect from college educated men, men who are lifting themselves above the common herd of floorwalkers, cops, and railway clerks. But where, beyond a possible degree, some text books—perhaps—a college sweater, a few yells, lies the difference.

They all swallow the weak puerilities dished out in *Liberty* and *The American*; they flock to the same movies; croon with the same bellicose or anemic singers; gush like hosiery clerks of Richard Halliburton; and know of art only as the formless angels and dead doves on tombstones. There are exceptions, naturally, but we concern ourselves with the majority of our students, and having considered them, let us forget them, and look at the state of affairs on our campus.

We have our buildings, of course—such as they are—but a perpetual living in them, a spitting from their windows, a shivering under their showers, breeds familiarity, and familiarity contempt. We have a bookstore, with thirty odd books perched on a glass case, with no opportunity for browsing and examining, with nothing in it worthy of browsing about. One is not expected to buy beyond the necessary text book, and if one does, he is stared

at. There are bookstores down town, but they sell valentines and typewriter parts. On the campus we also have a music room dominated over by a raucous radio and more raucous bridge players, and with four or five magazines—toothpaste ads rudely ripped out—pertaining vaguely to music. And pictures, there are none, nowhere. The stunted craving for art, or let us say color, is sometimes satisfied by a wallpaper hued replica of “The End of the Trail”, situated somewhere between seven odd pennants on our walls, or more likely by a fifty cent strip of fake tapestry, with very emasculated sylvan scenes, palpably suggestive of fairies or what not. There remains of course Jean Harlow, in chrome, in color, in frame, but chiefly and to great proportions undraped, and the more undraped the better. Such is our art. And why speak of sculpture? That belongs to the unmentionable. We have our library with magazines and a few novels. But the library is a place visited under compulsion, where one discovers sometime during his sophomore year a magazine called *Harper's*, another called *The Forum*, with articles about something to be embodied in a weekly theme. Ten months later these magazines have been forgotten. A few don't forget, of course. But why speak of them. We have a faint suspicion they are pansies, lilies or what not, and if they are not, they might as well be. We also have our dramatics, offering discreet entertainment at discreet intervals, with no art, no acting, in spite of

good intentions and an unappreciated director. How could it be otherwise, where any histrionic ambition must be satisfied with genteel disportment for the edification of lambent onlookers—who, were the times different, and money in other places, would be chewing popcorn from a mutual bag at a Buck Jones Western, or at the latest saucer-facing of Constance Bennett. There is, or there used to be, something like a literary society. It is not literary. There are rumors of politics, some headlines, but no student discussions. But vaguely we wonder what the Reds did to Lindbergh's baby, and remember a phrase in an old history book about Karl Marx and the teacher's neat qualifying phrase about it. Such are our conditions, our environments. And we are unconcerned. They make life easy.

Now let us return to the majority. They are excellent. They are healthy, fresh, boyish, and loud. But don't let them see you reading a volume of poetry, paging through a folio of impressionistic prints—nudes excluded—or find you behind a locked door meditating over a sunset. Unless your chest expansion rivals that of the most bull-like Freshman's and unless you can throw yourself in immediate despair or ecstasy over the latest Georgia basketball returns, you are automatically a pansy and suspected of far viler things. This attitude is epitomized in two friends. The one, a rather formidable athlete, who never rides in a rumble seat because mamma at home does not approve of it, discovered a friend reading a volume of Edna

Millay's poetry voluntarily. The consequent uproar on the floor, followed by paddlings and lamentations, gave evidence that the intense manhood of our friend was being avenged. The other, a gentle, non-active, ra-rah boy, betook himself in amazement to Sunday school for consolation, when he found us reading Merejkowski's *Leonardo da Vinci*, insulted that Americans should waste their time and money on books about Wops, by a Polack or a Kike. After all, the ARCHIVE printed book reviews for such extreme necessities.

But at whose door shall we lay the blame for all this? Our systems of education? Let us admit generously that it is a bit outmoded. But then, where are we? Our instructors? But after all like physicians their first aim should be prevention, not cure of this malady. And cure quite often is impossible, with a malady so fixed and so

old. There is left alleviation, but its results bring little satisfaction. And sometimes we suspect the malady is contagious. Even the doctors get it. And then the final and most formidable question. Are we alone guilty? No, but the stench in the neighbor's yard does not eradicate ours. In fact, it may increase it.

But is the subject worthy of any thought or consideration? May be not. After all we have excellent neighbors. They shoot a fair game of craps, their cigarettes are good and free, their highballs are expertly mixed, they have all the football scores from Dan to Beersheba at their finger tips, they have *Ballyhoo* or *Hoocy* on their tables, and what they don't know about women isn't worth a crooked penny. But after all, what about your bootlegger, your iceman, your butcher? They are good guys too. And after all. Yes, after all.

D. C. D.



Aubade

(Forest of Compiègne: October)

By R. P. HARRISS

Now the swallows quit the eaves,
the wine-wind stirs the poplar leaves,
the forest mast is sweet to smell
and berries, as they blacken, swell;
old upland ways all glow like fire
beyond the paddock, stack and byre,
where pheasant hen and pheasant cock
make thrif-
ty rust-
lings in
the shock,
and beeches flaunt their pied costume
of minstrel's cloak and casquette-plume.

Across an elder brooding wold
the late year trails her cloth of gold,
touching each vineyard, croft, and tree,
each immemorial verity,
the while her song wells soft and full
of ancients' inscrutable.
And deep in thicket, buck and boar
tread coverts secret, dim and hoar
where boar and buck and bird abode
ere Roland to the hunting rode.

The Prince of French Biographers: André Maurois

By CYRIL CLEMENS

IN a pleasant residential district of Paris, at the end of Avenue Borgheze about twenty-five minutes on the bus from the Arc de Triomphe, lives André Maurois, the great French biographer. When I rang the bell for my appointment one fine May morning at the exceedingly handsome wrought iron door, a butler opened it, and conducted me through a large hall into a richly furnished drawing room opening with a row of charming French windows on a green and peaceful garden. I sat down on a chair near a pretty little gilt table containing a number of books, among them being, *New York* inscribed in French "To my dear friend André Maurois", from Paul Morand, and *Le Ble qui Leve* (Coming Harvest) by the great French novelist René Bazin. The whole room struck me as being charmingly and gracefully furnished. In one corner stood a grand piano which gave evidence of having been used lately. On the walls were several fine portraits of the type that the eighteenth century English painters did so well. In a few minutes André Maurois came forth through a little side door: a man of medium height with black hair, a lively step, in the prime of his life—his eyes quick and

scintillating and conveying the impression that they would not wear a puzzled look for long even in the most difficult circumstances, but would quickly arrive at a decision. His smile was winning and attractive but lingered too short a time upon his face. He spoke in perfect English with hardly a trace of accent.

After shaking hands with me, Maurois said, leading the way, "Would you please come into my study: there we can talk with more comfort." The study was a snug little room, three walls being covered with bookcases, all filled from the floor to the ceiling, and the fourth wall being taken up with a huge window looking on the same delightful garden that I had seen from the drawing room. In front of the window stood a massive desk, covered at each end with books and magazines, with a half finished page of manuscript and a large blue fountain pen (I unconsciously compared its color with that of the blue clouds that hung over Paris that morning) showing that he had been at his author's task until my arrival. After showing me a chair Maurois swung his desk chair around so that he would face me.

"Mark Twain was the author that

first made me fond of the United States," began Maurois, "I think he is the author that best represents the American spirit to foreigners. My first visit to America confirmed every impression I had gained of your country from my reading of the humorist's works. I cannot say that much for any other author."

"Do you think the French can understand Mark's humor?" I next asked Maurois.

"I do not think that I am a good person to answer that question," returned he, "because from my earliest years I have read English and I could enjoy American and English books directly without depending on the halting medium of translation. It is my opinion that there is a good deal of American humor that the French miss—are in fact constitutionally incapable of understanding. Yet I feel that France is more akin to America in spirit than it is to England. The French find the English provokingly slow at times."

"Which of Twain's books do you find most popular in France," I asked.

"I think it is the various collections of his short stories," replied Maurois; "one of the most popular has been a collection that appeared under the title, *Plus Fort que Sherlock Holmes*. We French are apt to lose ourselves in the longer works of the American."

"After reading your *Disraeli*, Mr. Maurois, I felt as though I had known him in real life. How did you happen to achieve such an effect," I asked.

"I employed my theory that the smallest details about a man are often

the most interesting. Everything that can give us an idea of what the man actually looked like, the tone of his voice, the style of his conversation, is essential. I feel that if a biographer is not capable of making us see a human being of flesh and blood behind the clouds of papers and speeches and action he is lost. Therefore when Disraeli received the honorary doctorate at Oxford I mention the fact that he scanned the ladies' gallery with his monocle and discovering Mary Anne, threw up to her with his fingers an almost imperceptible kiss; a little thing, but what an indication of character was Disraeli's note to O'Connell, 'I am one who will not be insulted even by a Yahoo!; and again his touch of subtle flattery when he wrote to Victoria, 'We authors'; and what an illumination of Mary Anne's character is the remarks she made to some ladies who were discussing Greek sculpture, 'Oh, you ought to see my Dizzy in his bath.' That is what I mean by apparently trivial incidents which shed light upon a character like a flash of lightning."

"Have you ever considered the biography of some American," I asked the Frenchman.

"I have long been seeking a suitable subject for an American biography," replied Maurois, "but so far I have been totally unsuccessful. I am endeavoring to find someone who was as representative of American life of the Nineteenth Century as Disraeli was of English life of the same period. It has to be a man that is well known, otherwise the public will

not be interested. A good title will sell many copies of a book."

I suggested General Grant.

"I have thought of him," Maurois answered, "but for several reasons he doesn't seem suitable. He belongs to one section of the United States rather than to the whole. He is not national like Washington or Lincoln, who by the way have both been treated too often for me to attempt with them, I fear. A senator who had a long term of office might be good, but none of them have enough popular appeal."

"Was the play *Disraeli* taken from your biography," I next inquired of Maurois.

"No, it was not," replied Maurois, "I think as a matter of fact that the play was actually on the boards a few months before my book appeared. But I know George Arliss rather well and consider him a most charming Englishman. On one occasion he suggested that I write a play about Voltaire. The idea pleased me and I was on the point of commencing, when at a discussion Arliss asked me what parts of the philosopher's life I would deal with. When I answered that I had in mind taking up his entire career he replied that the philosopher's life would have to be telescoped into a few scenes for a play. Although I felt constitutionally unable to do this, I tried it, only to find that I could not. In the end, Arliss and I were obliged to give up the idea."

When I presented Maurois with the copy of a new book called, *Goldrush Days with Mark Twain*, he excused

himself a minute to get one of his own books to present me.

André Maurois was born in 1885 at Elbeuf, a textile town situated on the Seine not far from Rouen. While at school at the Rouen Lycée his family lost their money, and the boy was obliged to return to help his father in the textile mills. Although greatly wrapped up in literature, young Maurois was obliged to give all his time to business. With the outbreak of the World War he promptly joined his Country's colors, and on account of his fine knowledge of English, was appointed liaison officer to the Ninth Scottish Division. While in the army Maurois had the opportunity to write for the first time since his school days. He not unnaturally took the material nearest at hand which in this case were the English and the Scotch, and wove an amusing and witty story around the activities of some British officers that he felt might well have stepped out of a book by his favorite author Dickens. The manuscript he kept in his knapsack until the last year of the war when it appeared in 1918 under the title, *Les Silences du Colonel Bramble*. This novel achieves the paradox of being at once both malicious and good natured. Two more war books followed, *Le Général Bramble* and *Les Discours du Docteur O'Grady*, dealing with practically the same group of officers, and containing much conversation, for Maurois is exceedingly fond of talk both for its own sake and for the sake of art.

The war over Maurois returned to the textile business at Elbeuf but,

thanks to his three successful novels (strange to say none of these have been translated into English), he was now able to devote three days out of every week to literature. In 1920 he produced *Angé ni Bête* which is an historical novel to the extent that it deals with the life of Shelley. This was only moderately successful. When Maurois returned to the room I asked him what caused him to start writing biographies.

"Well," said Maurois lighting a cigarette, "I was vexed that my novel dealing with the life of Shelley was only a mediocre success, so I made a thorough study of the reasons why it did not succeed with the public. I came to the conclusion that when the public takes up a book about a person of whom they have heard a great deal, they want to read facts and not fiction. So after working pretty steadily for over two years, I made a biography out of Shelley, but without notes, eulogies, acknowledgements or any of the usual impediments most people think are absolutely essential to a biography."

After a minute or two of silence, he went on: "The biographer must not invent anything but his art is to forget. If he has at his disposal two hundred letters and a long diary, he must know how to extract the few sentences that will convey a genuine impression."

"Yours is rather a difficult task," I commented.

"Indeed it is," returned Maurois, "for it is extremely arduous and exacting to invest a real life with any

kind of unity and beauty. It resists such treatment very stubbornly. Life is extremely complicated and intricate. It is not simple enough. But we cannot elaborate or curtail details so as to alter the essentials of a life. In this connection I always keep before me those words of Dr. Johnson, 'A story is a picture either of an individual, or of human nature in general: if it be false, it is a picture of nothing'."

"Mr. Strachey has rightly demonstrated not that the hero is an ordinary man, but that an ordinary man or woman can become a hero or a heroine."

"Do you find human nature very complicated?" I asked Maurois.

"I do indeed," he rejoined rubbing his chin with his thumb and forefinger; "but I think that in the same way that in order to explain observed phenomena in physics, we must visualize the atoms as systems of electrons, so to understand an individual character we must realize that it is made up of diverse personalities."

"In my book *Aspects of Biography*, I state that the search for historical truth is the work of the scholar; the search for the expression of a personality is rather the work of the artist; can the two things be done together? It is my belief that they can, but not without much time and trouble. Biographers have to do the best they can with their complex characters, but a novelist can simplify his characters—for the most complex hero of a novel is infinitely less complex than the most simple of human beings."

(Continued on Page 30)

Will Rogers or Chic Sales?

(This MS was in the hands of the editor of The Archive before the author read Walter Blair's review in *American Literature*, Vol. III, No. 3. The two discussions agree on many points, but of course were written for entirely different purposes.)

By GAY W. ALLEN

I

ALTHOUGH preëminently important as a scholarly history of our national comic traditions and a criticism of our native literature, Miss Rourke's *American Humor*¹ is equally interesting as a book with a thesis. The historical and literary value of this work are being competently reviewed in the learned journals, but an exposition and brief discussion of *American Humor* as primarily a thesis—with both the faults and virtues of this form of creative interpretation—may prove of special interest to college students. We must necessarily begin with the exposition.

II

The first native character to get into the jokes, legends, and folklore of the seventeenth-century America was the Yankee peddler, a curious mixture of crudity and shrewdness, masquerade and self-consciousness, humor and emotion. But "by 1815 the American seemed to regard himself as a work of art and began that embellished self-portraiture which nations as well as individuals may undertake." From

the Yankee peddler descended Brother Jonathan (eventually "Uncle Sam"), who soon got into foreign portraits, the results of which were to stimulate three belligerent ideas in America: (1) all refinements begin at home; (2) they don't matter anyway; (3) nat'r'l-ness is the chief virtue. Eventually the Yankee was influenced by the West, but before that took place a Yankee cult had formed in the East—which included Sam Slick (the clock peddler), the progenitor of Hezekiah Biglow—; and soon the printed monologues of Jack Downing presented the Yankee as an oracle.

The next legendary character set up by the American people was the Backwoodsman, who apparently sprang from the South or West. Like the Yankee, his faith was a rooted Calvinism, though Indian legends and superstitions early seeped into his consciousness. In him were combined all the Yankee traits of character and a new egocentricity: strength, size, scale, power were his obsessions. New England criticized the Backwoodsman, and he reverted to the same self-defense already exhibited by the Yankee under foreign criticism.

From the Backwoodsman came the

¹ *American Humor*—A Study in the National Character. By Constance Rourke. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1931. Pp. 324.

"tall tale", the qualities of which are represented in Crockett's epic boast: "I'm the darling of old Kentucky that can eat up a painter, hold a buffalo out to drink, and put a rifle-ball through the moon." The true tall tale stressed the supernatural in a prosaic background. It should also be noticed that the more incredulous the story, the blunter was the face of the teller—one of the most important uses of masquerade.

In the early 20's the Negro completed the trinity in American mythology. This was likewise the period of newspaper hoaxes, burlesque oratory, and black-face comedians; it was also the heyday of the strolling players, the revivalists, and humorous affectations in dress. And all of these stirring activities combined the same traditions.

III

Against this background of the homely, the traditional, and primitive folklore in general Miss Rourke places in relief the comic poet. (Miss Rourke quotes [p. 155 ff.] several of Meredith's theories of comedy and attempts to refute them by her own observations on American humor, ignoring the fact that Meredith's use of the word 'comedy' in *The Egoist* is with a special connotation, without reference to 'humor' in the ordinary sense.) The most ingenious part of the study is her identification of the comic traditions in Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, Poe, Melville, Hawthorne, Howells, Henry James, Emily Dickinson, Frost, and

Edwin Arlington Robinson. Let us notice some of her typical analyses:

"Hitch your wagon to a star" is Western hyperbole. Furthermore: (1) Emerson and Jack Downing, "that plain Yankee figure", each assumed the rôle of oracle about the same time; (2) Emerson—in accord with the native tradition, from the Yankee peddler down to the latest comic actor—used native monologue, avoiding personal revelation of fact or feeling. Though the inner voice (the undertone, shall we say?) often spoke, "this belonged not to the realm of introspection cultivated by the Puritan, but to that other realm of the pure Yankee".

Although a few isolated critics have refused to accept the popular theories on Poe's remoteness from his contemporary scene, Miss Rourke is the first, I believe, to identify his indebtedness to the traditional story tellers of the West:

"... the patterns if not the substance of his tales were those of a native story-teller. The gamut of his moods might have been drawn from the West, plumbing horror, yet turning also to a wild contrived comedy. Because of his own dark fate, and because Poe himself often stressed the *frisson*, terror has overtopped comedy in the general apprehension of his tales. His designations of 'grotesque' and 'arabesque' and his later 'tales of terror' have created a further submergence of the comic. Yet *King Pest*, with its background of the plague and the night, is one of the most brilliant pure burlesques in the language, transmuting terror into gross comedy, as it had often been transmuted in the western tales. (Pp. 182-3.)

But Miss Rourke does not excuse Poe's distorted humor: "His laughter was inhuman, and mixed with hys-

teria. His purpose in the hoaxes was to make his readers absurd. . . . His objective was triumph, the familiar object of the popular comedy."

It is of course not surprising to find the comic traditions working in Whitman. His stress on physical power and strength is certainly Western, as is his comic boasting. Also:

His famous, "I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world" might have been shouted by the gamecocks of the wilderness, even though the image belongs to the cities. [p. 174.]

In his early *Boston Ballad* Whitman joined in the classic comic warfare between the backwoodsman and the Yankee. [p. 174.]

Whitman used language as a new and plastic and even comical medium, as it had long since been used in native folk-lore. [p. 175.]

To enter the world of Whitman is to touch the spirit of American popular comedy. [p. 175.]

The monologue or rhapsody was turned inward, without analysis or introspection. . . . Whitman anticipated by many years the modern mode of inner revelation . . . its final move into the realm of soliloquy. [p. 177.]

It has become almost trite to insist upon Mark Twain's indebtedness to Western influences, but we should notice in passing that he "turned to the Yankee fable in *Innocents Abroad*." Apparently Miss Rourke agrees with Professor Pattee that with Mark Twain the matter was not important; but the manner of telling everything—and the manner, of course, was Western.

That Henry James was influenced by American humor Miss Rourke believes because: (1) he portrayed the inner mind, (2) he is self-conscious as the backwoodsman under New Eng-

land criticism—or the average American under foreign criticism—; (3) his later fastidiousness is merely hypersensitivity over the native prepossession for the homely.

Even Emily Dickinson is found to be "in a profound sense a comic poet in the American tradition . . . comic in the Yankee strain with its resilience and sudden unprepared ironical lines." An example of her shaded subtleties is:

One need not be a chamber to be haunted,
One need not be a house;
The brain has corridors surpassing
Material place.

"Her poetry was indwelling in a final sense; she used that deeply interior speech which is soliloquy." Again we find in her poetry the air of improvisation—a quality which can be traced back through every important American writer and popular story teller.

Edwin Arlington Robinson (like Lindsay, Frost, Masters, and Sandburg, all of whom "have revealed characters, fantasies, and patters of mind or feeling that appear in an early comic folklore") is sufficient proof of the survival of the native comic tradition in America. He is "master of that unobtrusive irony that has belonged to the Yankees; like the older Yankee he turns constantly to a dry metaphor—"An old vanity that is half as rich in salvage as old ashes'." Robinson's (1) understated comedy, (2) his objective portrayal of character, and (3) his homely tradition of monologue verging upon soliloquy may almost be taken as a summary of liter-

ary traditions in America—and Miss Rourke's formula.

Miss Rourke's thesis leads logically to an explanation of why America has not made any outstanding contributions to the novel; the romance, the cumulative tale, the saga, and even allegory have developed instead. (Ergo: Even Mr. Cabell's *Poictesme* rests firmly on orthodox American comic traditions!) Sinclair Lewis may appear to be the exception, but even he is a fabulist. His is "that highly cumulative fable-making which had been a characteristic American gift."

Will Rogers, Miss Rourke observes, "is an adviser in high places, a hundred years after Jack Downing."

And the American is "still given to the rhapsody, the monologue, the tale, in life as in literature."

IV

We should not quarrel with Miss Rourke because her illustrations are hand-picked, for hand-picking is essential for any competent argument; and we should certainly not over-emphasize the fact that her study tells only part of the truth, for it is not the purpose of a thesis to tell all the truth—in fact, is not even concerned with the whole truth—; but in order to show wherein lie the pitfalls of a thesis as a means of literary interpretation, let us notice some of the ways in which Miss Rourke's criticisms are misleading.

She does not say that there were no other influences on American writers except native traditions, but the almost complete absence of any refer-

ence to foreign influences gives the reader the impression that she has a bias for the native amounting, at times, almost to a prepossession. This even leads to a suspicion that Miss Rourke is too adept at identifying American comic traditions.

This, I think, is especially true in her discussion of Emerson, whose adherence to the cult of the homely Miss Rourke attributes to the influence of the backwoodsman. Carlyle revered the homely as fervently as Emerson ever did; yet he was not influenced by the American backwoodsman, though Emerson, we know, *was* influenced by Carlyle. In fact, the whole attitude of reverence for the homely may be traced back to European romanticism.

Even the literary use of the monologue bordering on soliloquy has had a long ancestry. It can be as accurately attributed to Chaucer or Boccaccio as to the Yankee peddler. And let us not overlook the fact that one of the most powerful (and often overlooked!) influences on Whitman was the Bible—from which may derive his rhapsody, his peculiar lyricism, his portrayal of the inner mind without introspection, and his 'generic I'. Though Whitman was indisputably and romantically influenced by the geographical hugeness of his America, I am not even sure that part of his comic boasting may not derive from the Bible. That he had a 'Messianic complex' is usually accepted.

Again, stressing Emily Dickinson's irony as essentially Yankee, seems doubtful when we consider the irony

of Humbert Wolfe's poetry, which no one, I believe, would derive from Yankee sources. Irony itself (even the Emily Dickinson brand) is at least as old as Greek poetry, which her poetry (along with the *Spoon River Anthology*) most resembles. But, after all, does irony of any certain kind have to have a derivation?

Possibly it is true that America has had to go through her stage of legends, allegories, and fables (a stage which corresponds, one may say, to the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries in Europe); but it is equally true that the legends, allegories, and fables of Europe have been transported, transmuted, and borrowed outright by both American literature and folklore. (It has been found, for example, that practically all the Kentucky ballads are simply paraphrases

and adaptations of the original three hundred and six English and Scottish ballads!)

American Humor is in many ways a study of profound value. It would be if it did nothing except call attention to the importance of the native contemporary influence, often overlooked, especially in the criticism on Poe. But while it is true that Will Rogers is an adviser in high places, we should remember that Chic Sales is as potent an influence in, shall we say, low places?—which are more numerous. And Chic Sales is unmistakably Rabelaisian! Whether or not he traces back directly to a Rabelais tradition, which is possible, does not matter particularly. The fact that the Chic Sales cult exists is sufficient proof that certain traits of human nature are more universal than regional.



Women of Aran

By EDWIN BJÖRKMAN

Women of Aran
 With eyes for ever turning westward
 To the rim of racing foam . . .

The strident, stinging wind
 That raises on their wrinkled cheeks
 Pale ghosts of roses, sulphurously pink . . .

The ocean hurling threats in sullen majesty
 Against the barren and defiant shore . . .

The breaking crests that pound
 Thunderously on the stolid rocks
 And stain the heavens with salty dew . . .

Within that seething hell
 A score of struggling men,
 Blind, deaf, and dumb beneath the wrath
 Of powers primitive and soulless;
 Tossed, torn, and throbbing
 With an agony of toil too great
 For consciousness of fear . . .

On shorn and wind-worn cliffs,
 The women huddling in their shawls,
 Their wasted bodies shivering,
 Their straining eyes too dim for sight,
 Their frozen lips too stiff for prayer,
 Their stricken hearts too dead for grief,
 Their minds too numbed for curses even . . .

The strife that lasts eternally:
 The wait that outlasts eternity:
 The neatly balanced scales of fate . . .

Women of Aran:
 When shall they cease to be
 Fit symbols of humanity?

A Southern Magazine:

A Brief Sketch

By DAVID K. JACKSON

THE recent observance of the thirtieth anniversary of *The South Atlantic Quarterly* in its January, 1932, number provides a favorable occasion for a retrospection of magazine ventures in the South, and particularly the publication of *The Southern Literary Messenger*, the most important literary magazine yet published in the South. Despite the economic, social, and political differences of the two periods in which the magazines have appeared, a cursory examination of the above-mentioned periodicals affords one striking similarity. The establishment of the *Quarterly* in 1902 by the 9019 society of Trinity College, under the inspiring leadership of the late Dr. John Spencer Bassett, was the expression of a hope to "provide for young writers and investigators of the South a medium for the publication of their work. . . ."¹ James E. Heath expressed an equally ambitious plan in the columns of the *Messenger*, which he edited for several months: "The 'Messenger' is designed chiefly to encourage the practice of literary composition among our own writers of both sexes. . . ."²

On the other hand, the *Quarterly* and the *Messenger* represent two distinct periods in the growth of the South. *The Southern Literary Messenger* was an expression of the ante-bellum South, a province involved in political problems and the slavery question, deeply jealous of its status in the newly founded republic. *The South Atlantic Quarterly* typifies the new national attitude of Southerners after the Civil War, when past hatreds and wrongs were forgotten in the reconstruction of a New South. An editorial in a recent issue of the *Quarterly* is a declaration of the aims of that periodical:

While naturally particularly interested in the consideration of matters of especial concern to the section in which it is located, the *Quarterly* strives at all times to have a national viewpoint and to be free from narrow sectionalism or provincialism in any sense. The constant effort has been made to develop through the publication a closer feeling between the sections and to encourage a vigorous national spirit.³

In spite of the failure of many magazine enterprises in Charleston and in other southern cities, Thomas Willis White, a printer with literary inclinations, began the publication of *The Southern Literary Messenger: Devoted to Every Department of Literature*

¹ "Thirty Years of the Quarterly (An Editorial)", *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, XXXI, 1 (January, 1932).

² Editorial Department, *The Southern Literary Messenger*, I, 125 (November, 1834). Hereinafter *The Southern Literary Messenger* is cited: S. L. M.

³ "Thirty Years of the Quarterly (An Editorial)", *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, XXXI, 2 (January, 1932).

and the *Fine Arts* in the city of Richmond, Virginia, in August, 1834. Richmond, with a population slightly less than 20,000, was one of the two literary centers of the South. The other, Charleston, has seen many magazines begun, only to fail after one or two years of existence. (The South was strewn with the wrecks of ill-fated magazine enterprises.) Richmond was the home of the Virginia Historical and Philosophical Society, as well as the capital of Virginia. Nearby were the two flourishing institutions of higher education, the University of Virginia and the College of William and Mary.

White, heedless of the failure of *The Southern Review* and the advice of friends, and anxious to make the South, and particularly Virginia, famous for its literary men as the state was already known for its orators and statesmen, secured the editorial assistance of James E. Heath, State Auditor of Virginia, novelist, and playwright. Like White, Heath was devoted to Southern interests, and had depicted Virginia life and manners in his novel, *Edge Hill*, and in a play, *Whigs and Democrats*, which received the following notice in the *Messenger*:

This is certainly something new under the sun. A Virginia Comedy! Long as the Old Dominion has been celebrated for some things,—long as her sons have been distinguished for following certain paths,—great as her career of glory has been in law, politics, war, eloquence, and even general literature,—this is the first time, we believe, and if not the first—assuredly one of the very few attempts ever made within her borders, in the field of dramatic writing. Well, why should not a Virginian try his skill in that department as well as other folks?⁴

⁴ *S. L. M.*, V, 571 (August, 1939).

Apparently Heath's first contribution to this Southern magazine was an essay in which he made the following appeal:

Hundreds of similar publications thrive and prosper north of the Potomac, sustained as they are by the liberal hand of patronage. *Shall not one be supported in the whole South?* . . . Are we to be doomed forever to a kind of vassalage to our northern neighbors—a dependence for our literary feed upon our brethren, whose superiority in all the great points of character,—in valor—eloquence and patriotism, we are no wise disposed to admit . . . without therefore intending anything invidious, or without cherishing any unkind or unmanly sentiments towards our political confederates, we ought forthwith to buckle on our armour, and assert our mental independence.⁵

Of the new magazine, Washington Irving wrote:

Strongly disposed as I always have been in favor of "the south" and especially attached to Virginia by early friendships and cherished recollections, I cannot but feel interested in the success of a work which is calculated to concentrate the talent and illustrate the high and generous character which pervade that part of the Union.⁵

The first number was a trial issue "sent forth by its Publisher, as a kind of pioneer, to spy out the land of literary promise before he resolves upon future action."⁶ For the August number which had 32 royal octavo pages, with each page divided by a line into two equal columns, White appeared as printer and proprietor. The magazine was to cost \$5 a year and to be published twice a month. Mr. White, however, relinquished his ambitious plan in favor of a monthly magazine and solicited unpaid contributions.

On the first page of the new maga-

⁵ *S. L. M.*, I, 1-3 (August, 1834).

⁶ *S. L. M.*, II, 1 (August, 1934).

zine were printed curiously enough commendatory letters from prominent gentlemen of the North, Washington Irving, James K. Paulding, J. Fenimore Cooper, John P. Kennedy, John Quincy Adams, and Peter A. Browne. These letters, said White, "ought to stimulate the pride and genius of the South, and awaken from its long slumber the literary exertion of this portion of our country."⁶

James Kirke Paulding, who approved the plans of the publisher, said, "You have abundance of literary talent among you; and the situation of so many well educated men, placed above the necessity of laboring either manually or professionally affords ample leisure for the cultivation of literature."⁴ James Fenimore Cooper's statement was that "If some, whom I could name, were to arouse from their lethargy, you would not be driven to apply to any one on this side of the Potomac for assistance."⁷

Unfortunately, the field of literature was not as promising as the encouraging tone of these letters. White ran over the country, seeking subscriptions to his pet scheme. Contributions came into the editorial sanctum, but most of them were works of the poorest quality. Conditions necessitated that the editor clip poems from already published books of verse and print them under *noms de plume*. One of the most frequent contributors to the *Messenger* was not a Southerner, but a New England woman, Mrs. Lydia Huntley Sigourney, the "sweet singer of Hartford", over whose "melting"

verse many a reader must have shed a tear. Promising writers followed too many pursuits to be successful. The study and practice of law under the guidance of such eminent professors as Thomas R. Dew and Judge Nathaniel Beverley Tucker, often side-tracked the interests of literary geniuses. Philip Pendleton Cooke, older brother of John Esten Cooke, the novelist, gave up the practice of law, retired to his country estate, and between his duties of a plantation-owner and the pleasures of hunting in the Shenandoah Valley wrote such celebrated lyrics and ballads as "Rosalie Lee", "Florence Vane", and "The Power of the Bards".

A notion of what was published in the *Messenger* can be obtained by a perusal of the table of contents for the November, 1834, issue: the first instalment of Robert G. Greenhow's "Sketches of the History and Present Conditions of Tripoli, with some accounts of the other Barbary States", Belinda's "The Dyspeptic Man", S.'s "The Reporter's Story, or the Importance of a Single Syllable", S. H.'s "The Cottage in the Glen", St. Leger Langon Carter's "Picture of Old Virginia", Lucian Minor's "Letters from New England" (which was reprinted by James Russell Lowell in *The Atlantic Monthly*), C. B. Shaw's "The Alleghany Levels", James E. Heath's "Virginia Historical and Philosophical Society", notices of new works, and editorial comments on the contributions which had been submitted to the *Messenger*. Thus, the magazine and

⁷ S. L. M., I, 1 (August, 1834).

its readers continued to suffer varying fortunes.

Through the kindness of John Pendleton Kennedy, a prominent lawyer and novelist of Baltimore, Maryland, Edgar Allan Poe, the most fascinating figure in American literature, was introduced to the owner of the Richmond monthly, and in the autumn of 1835, the impoverished Poe gladly returned to his former home and seated himself in the editorial chair of the *Messenger*. As a successor of J. E. Heath and E. V. Sparhawk, an obscure New England poet, Poe enthusiastically took over the editorial management of the *Messenger*, which almost immediately became known as one of the best periodicals of its kind from Maine to Louisiana and the eastern seaboard to Cincinnati. The lively, stinging, tomahawking critical notices by Poe made him many enemies but increased the circulation of the *Messenger* "in fifteen months" from 700 "to 5,500 subscribers paying an annual profit of \$10,000."⁸

Poe's lifelong ambition was to own and edit a magazine of his own, and here on the editorial staff of the *Messenger*, in spite of the hampering influence of the owner, Poe realized many of his fondest hopes. He appealed to his readers not only by his brilliant editorial department but also by his hoaxes and unusual short stories, among which were "Marginalia", "King Pest", and "Berenice".

Upon Poe's resignation in January,

⁸ *The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, edited by James A. Harrison, XVII, 178-179. Poe's statement to Patterson that the circulation increased from less than 1,000 to 5,000 subscribers is probably more correct. Harrison, *op. cit.*, XVII, 350.

1837, due to differences between the poet and the owner, the *Messenger* suffered a decline in position among literary journals which was never quite regained. Probably the darkest period of the magazine was the following three years, when Thomas Willis White struggled with financial difficulties and the lethargy of Southern writers.

During this time, Thomas W. White was assisted by Matthew Fontaine Maury, who was successful in establishing the United States Naval Academy, at Annapolis, Maryland. Both an imaginative scholar and a scientist interested in the physical geography of the sea, he contributed many entertaining and important articles to the *Messenger* so that the magazine became an unofficial organ of the United States Navy.

Not long after White's death, in September, 1843, the magazine was sold to Benjamin Blake Minor, who edited the *Messenger* for about four years. Minor revived public interest in the periodical by travelling through the North, and South, and the West. He found the Southerners were slow in paying their subscriptions and made many urgent appeals for financial assistance.

Minor's successor was John Reuben Thompson, a man of excellent literary tastes, who is best known for his lecture on Poe. Thompson rendered valuable aid to the reputation of the magazine and discovered the prominent Virginia novelist, John Esten Cooke. Other important contributors to the *Messenger*, besides those al-

ready mentioned, were William Gilmore Simms, Paul Hamilton Hayne, Henry Timrod, and Donald Graham Mitchell. While Thompson was travelling abroad, J. E. Cooke edited the *Messenger*. From all appearances, the glorious days, when Poe had edited the magazine, had returned, but in May, 1860, Thompson announced his resignation.

Dr. George William Bagby, a Virginia humorist of unusual ability, succeeded Thompson, as editor of the *Messenger*. Besides embodying the South's literary aspirations, Bagby expressed the hopes and trials of literary men. Joseph Leonard King, Bagby's biographer, declares:

With the possible exception of William Gilmore Simms, no other man in the South touched so many phases of its cultural life, or worked harder to develop a literary spirit among its people.⁹

During his editorship, Southern skies became clouded with the rumblings of the approaching Civil War; and, in spite of the half-successful efforts of the many former editors to keep the magazine out of political controversies and the slavery question which was being hotly contested both in the North and in the South, Bagby openly announced that the magazine was for, by, and of the South. Previously the

editors had tried to maintain a neutral attitude, but in the face of the ominous slavery agitation it was impossible for the magazine to keep from taking one side or the other. Drifting toward an intense sectionalism, the magazine became in very truth less *Literary* than *Southern*.

The Civil War brought an end not only to the Confederacy but also to the *Messenger* under the editorship of Frank Alfriend, a man of little literary importance. The price of the magazine became prohibitive to its subscribers, and almost all contributors held official positions with the Confederate Government or were active at the warfront.

Thus, *The Southern Literary Messenger* ceased to be published after a long period of useful service to Southern letters. Since its last number in June, 1864, there has appeared no magazine in the South which has been its equal. The importance of the *Messenger* lies not only in its significant molding of Southern literature, society, and politics but also in its development of Southern writers. Within the last three decades of the twentieth century efforts have been made unsuccessfully to revive the magazine, but so far no new volumes have been added to the files of *The Southern Literary Messenger*.

⁹ Joseph Leonard King, *Dr. George William Bagby: A Study of Virginian Literature, 1850-1880* (New York, 1927), p. vii.

BOOKS

John Donne After Three Hundred Years

A Garland for John Donne 1631-1931, edited by Theodore Spencer, Harvard University Press. 1931.

For this volume one is inclined to paraphrase the remark of Dr Louis Leaming Foreman on his edition of Plato; it is worth reading first of all because there is a great deal of Donne in it; would that the writers had quoted more! It is a little disappointing in its lack of any clear purpose, except to print things on Donne, and in failing to keep the promise of the title which, for a volume composed of scholarly or semi-scholarly papers, is somewhat affected. Some of the articles bear traces of the brand of the Festschrift volume, as written to order and under necessity, and there is great variety in their purpose and still more in their value, for some of them are informative indeed. The reviewer, certainly, is glad to say that he has learned something from his reading.

Mr John Sparrow is to be congratulated on having stuck close to his business of trying to find out when Donne travelled on the continent without consideration of the significance of the traveler at any time. He concludes by shifting clauses and paragraphs in Walton's *Life of Donne* from the order in which Walton left them written in a work several times revised, and so rearranging them that they present a sequence of events acceptable to himself. He is then able to conclude that "Walton bears reliable witness to the date as well as the extent of Donne's travels, and here—as very often—though his account is apparently improbable, on closer examination it appears that, in his circuitous and unsatisfactory way, he is telling us the truth".

Mrs Simpson puts clearly the unusual and important effect on Donne of the new astronomy, which he took more seriously than did some of his contemporaries. It appears, however, that she contrasts him rather too sharply with the dramatists & Milton. In one of the other essays Mr Spencer compares Chapman with Donne in this matter, and quotes a passage in which Donne draws from the new astronomy such theological teachings as Milton also did. Donne, we read, finally said: "Methinks the new astronomie is thus applicable well, that we which are a little earth, should rather move toward God, then that he which is fulfilling, and can come no whither, should move towards us." Without carrying the thought into allegory, Milton has his Adam ask:

What if the sun
Be centre to the world, and other stars
By his attractive virtue and their own
Incited, dance about him various rounds?

While Milton obviously approves of such questionings, he draws from the very doubts of astronomy a religious conclusion; in any case the circuit of the heavens speaks "the maker's high magnificence." In Dante the placing of the earth at the centre did not in itself lead to belief in the importance of man, for he too was able to say that looking from heaven he smiled at the mean semblance of the earth, approving that counsel which holds it for least. At present we usually overrate the contrast between the old and the new astronomy, forgetting that the new arose from the old, retaining much from it, & that the general truths of science are equally—in the age of either—suggested by old or new system.

The essay by Mr T. S. Eliot, which might be called *What Donne means to me*, is a highly interesting example of essentially direct

rather than historical interpretation of a figure of the past and might serve as the basis for a disquisition on the value or invalue of scholarly as distinguished from direct interpretation.

Mr Williamson seems to fail by reliance on the method of parallels, producing neither a work of exact scholarship nor of individual experience.

Mr Mario Praz, as his knowledge at any rate of Italian literature is wider than that of the other writers who throw Donne against the background of his age, has least and most specific to say on originality; instead of reproducing according to the traditional formula the "theme of the love dream" by addressing a rhetorical compliment to an absent beauty, Donne by a "new departure" represents the lady herself as rousing the poet from sleep. Yet though interested in thought Donne "was no original thinker himself. He aimed at artistic self-expression; therefore both the tentative creed of a new age, and the superannuated lore of many centuries, merely supplied him indiscriminately with illustrations for his own poems and homilies. He was like a lawyer choosing the fittest arguments for a case in hand; not like a searcher after a universally valid truth. The scientific theories having only the value of conjectures or plausible speculations in his curious mind, do not belong to a world entirely distinct from the world of fancy, as they would in an era of settled convictions. Rather, there is a continuous interchange of suggestions from fancy to scientific thought and vice-versa; and Donne is enabled to mix, in the same kaleidoscope, broken pieces of lore either old or new, and images properly belonging to the world of poetry." Can this, *mutatis mutandis*, be said of most poets?

ALLAN H. GILBERT.

A Somewhat Complacent Phoenix

These Restless Heads. By Branch Cabell. New York City: Robert M. McBride & Co. 1932. 253 pp. \$2.50.

Not so many month ago Mr James Branch Cabell made manifest to the world that his literary career had come to an end. To make this end all the more formidable and, let us generously say, logical, he wagged a warning finger at several of his contemporaries, bidding them to follow his example, lest before long their public would be aware of their lost creative prime and their approaching senility. Worshipers of the eighteen volumes which comprised his "Biography of Dom Manuel" received the news of his retirement with vast regrets. A goodly number of his readers, however, who by the reading of "Jurgen" or some other one of his volumes, had been inveigled to enter the somnolently romantic, mellowly gallant, and vaguely risqué realms of Poictesme, neither turned their eyes down in regret, nor disported themselves in any noticeable glee. James Branch Cabell had retired, and according to his own declaration he had retired sensibly; hence, another literary chapter was completed and closed, and that was that. However, James Branch Cabell's retirement proved to be only a retirement of the James part of his name, for here before us lies "These Restless Heads," by Branch Cabell, purported to be a sort of a phoenix risen from the ashes of Poictesme and its creator.

How this retirement of a Christian name can be an example worthy of emulation for those contemporaries who were warned to be on the verge of creative senility, we fail to comprehend logically. It may be a question of minor importance, however. Branch Cabell, having condemned himself and his contemporaries in his retirement notice, justifies any reader or critic to make use of his remarks as a boomerang. Therefore, even though we cannot forget "Jurgen," "Beyond

Life," or "The Silver Stallion," let us look at the book at hand, thus reinforced.

The book is composed of three main parts. It begins with a fable, it continues with a series of informal essays, and it ends with another fable in which the purpose and subject matter of the first fable has been reversed. On the whole it is a book of reflections, rather nostalgic reflections, which are permeated with enough disillusion to be sweetly melancholy, and with a sufficient shunning of direct conclusions to leave the reader rather tepidly unconcerned and dreamily undetached. If one's critical gauge requires nothing beyond that, there is little left to be desired. It is therefore a book for readers who prefer a scented, rose-water type of estheticism, who like to lean back on cool shady porches with as little awareness of the grittier side of life as possible, who can overlook class, race and life struggles as long as they are not deprived of gazing fondly upon the portrait of a respected, patrician ancestor. All the vast horde of other readers will return empty, with the knowledge that their tongues have tasted something sweet, but that their stomachs are still hungry.

First, Mr Cabell deals with the story of Duke Prospero, restored to his lordship of Milan. The ending of the story is neither happy nor unhappy. It represents a man who is tired of enchantment and yearns for reality. Enchantment and beauty have changed his entire outlook, however, so that in the end he sets out nostalgically to find his enchanted island again. The whole thing, one cannot fail but suspect, epitomizes Mr Cabell's own outlook on life fairly well. He is the satisfied gentleman who sits back comfortably and ruminates about the discreet and rosy adventures of his youth.

The tale of Thomas the Rhymer, which concludes the book, is a reversal of the above. Thomas, after a seven year's so-

journ with the Queen of Faery, returns home to find the practical and domestic life, dominated over by his wife, rather sordid and prosaic. When the Queen of Faery summons him once more, however, he comes to the practical conclusion that fantastic adventures and fairyland episodes belong to youth. He spurns the queen's enticements, and at the end of his days he dies, with proper medical attention, surrounded by domesticity and wife and children. The meaning of the fable is clear, so clear, that no-one can fail to note how inconsequential it really is.

This leaves us the core of the book, the informal essays and reflections. Here the author condescends to discuss the young, worshipful writers who flock to his Richmond home to buzz around him in adulation, but also in self-praise. In these essays he explains again what and where the Poictesme is of his former eighteen volumes. He discourses lovingly and ironically about tragedy, romance and disillusion, especially the latter. These essays compared with the fables are characterized by a somewhat disarming literalness. In fact, this literalness is so evident, and at the same time so discouraging about the tawdry lot of the writer, that it fills us with misgiving; and by the time we have reached the last, we are somewhat weary of the condescending, ironic gentleman, who chooses, now that the literary seas have been weathered, to sit back and reveal the foibles and caprices of minor mortals. We learn that life is illogical, altogether futile and confused, but it is only necessary to train oneself to an attitude of fond, semi-romantic scorn to make it bearable and actually vastly amusing.

Little else need be said. The style is ornate and charming. The superabundant adjectives, so evident in his earlier works, have rather increased than decreased. But we must admit that the style suits the subject matter admirably. A small array of ideas,

a limited quantity of truisms, a non-disturbing cultural pleasantness are dressed in the proper syntax and diction for those who only seek the charming and entertaining. But, we leave with the comfort, that though James Branch Cabell has decapitated himself, we can still turn to his earlier works with far greater pleasure and profit than to this one of his present incarnation. And thus we can take farewell, without great regret, of this somewhat complacent phoenix.

DAVID CORNEL DEJONG.

The Daft Decade

Only Yesterday; An Informal History of the Nineteen-Twenties. By Frederick Lewis Allen. New York and London: Harper & Brothers. 1931. 370 pp. \$3.00.

Mr Allen aims to interpret vividly and entertainingly the major trends in American life during those pulsing years framed by the armistice and the stock market crash of 1929. In this he has been highly successful. The political struggles and scandals during these years are not unfamiliar. Mr Allen manages, however, to contribute to their interpretations. He writes with restrained but none the less deep appreciation of President Wilson; while his characterization of President Harding, unfortunately well supported, will cause the sensitive to shudder. Familiar also during this period is the literature of revolt and censure, the course of the growing pains of a new morality, the growth of racketeering and ballyhoo, and the progressive unfolding of what may be termed the automotive revelation; yet it is rewarding to refresh one's memory with the aid of an author who displays marked ability for happy selection and significant emphasis. As Mr Allen states in his preface: "One advantage the book will have over most histories; hardly anyone old enough to read it can fail to remember the entire period with which it deals." The hazards accompany-

ing this advantage, the author has in the main skillfully avoided.

The work is one of vulgarization, in somewhat more than the technical sense; it pretends to nothing further. Most of the sources are known to the well-informed and have been currently available during the last decade. But there are few people who will have found time during the ten years to sift and summarize not only the Harding scandal literature, but also the accounts of salient trials, the biographies of the leading figures in the hero racket, and the chronicles of the eventful progress of prosperity. In these and more, *Only Yesterday* is a requisite orientation for a decade which opens with Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise* and closes with a new note in Hemingway's *Farewell to Arms*; or for one which begins with a bomb in Wall Street explosion, in a sense only moderately figurative, at its close. The last two chapters on the bull market and the crash offer to layman and economist a description of these occurrences that has nowhere been surpassed for dramatic interest.

CHRISTOPHER ROBERTS.

Evolution of the Eternal Art

Our Changing Theatre. By R. Dana Skinner. New York: Dial Press, Inc. 327 pp. Price \$3.00.

Our Changing Theatre is a volume of dramatic criticism, but a very unusual one. Mr Skinner has produced this book out of his own experiences as a theatre-goer, not as a newspaper critic, and has given the reader therefore a more personal and human reaction to what has been best in the American and European drama of recent times. Yet he is not simply a frequenter of the theatre. He is dramatic editor of *The Commonwealth*, one of our best-known weekly reviews, and enjoys a background of nearly thirty years of theatre-going.

Our Changing Theatre is a book to be

enjoyed by everyone interested in things theatrical: plays, actors, scenic art, and the screen. Written in a delightful but straightforward style the book makes its appeal to student, professional, and dilettante alike, and above all Mr Skinner has given a very sane, just, and rational appraisal of the efforts of the outstanding workers in the dramatic fields of our present day. A few of the chapter headings may indicate the scope of his survey: The American Scene—The Song in Tragedy—Tragedy Without Song—Laughter for Tears—The Art of Fog Lifting—Prisoners of Doubt—Europe's Tragedies Without Hope—Strong Currents and Stagnant Waters—Can Actors Be Artists?—Screen and Ether—Ships in the Harbor.

Our Changing Theatre is not simply a discussion of plays, playwrights, and actors of modern and recent times such as one finds in a text-book for class use in drama courses and Woman's Clubs, but it contains valuable chapters on acting, production, the value of motion pictures and the type of work best suited to the screen, and on the art of dramatic criticism itself. It transcends the mere physical theatre and discusses the tumult and change taking place in modern American life and the evolution of the American mind. Using Shakespeare's admirable definition of the purpose of the stage—"To hold a mirror up to nature"—Mr Skinner looks into that mirror and draws valuable conclusions about life, art, and literature. Otis Skinner, the eminent American actor, says of the author: "No juster analysis of the past few seasons on the stages of Manhattan has been made anywhere. Mr Skinner has earned the gratitude of every reader who feels that the decent theatre of our time may change but cannot die."

After reading *Our Changing Theatre* one should have a keener perception of what is most worth-while in this most human of all

arts, a greater appreciation and enjoyment in attending the theatre, and a more critical opinion in regard to what he sees there.

A. T. WEST.

Thoughts of Beauty

Harvest of Time. By Harold Trowbridge Pulsifer.
New York: Houghton Mifflin Co. 48 pp. \$2.00.

For the many admirers of Harold Trowbridge Pulsifer's "Mothers and Men", this new volume of verse will be eagerly read and appreciated, since, like the previous volume, "Harvest of Time" consists of the same type of poems, notable for sincerity, dignity, and grace. Having already been published in such outstanding magazines as the *Saturday Review of Literature*, *The Outlook*, and *Poetry Review*, many of the selections included in this small book will be familiar to readers of modern poetry. Their appearance in these important publications justifies their value and appeal, and readily enhances the worth of such a unified collection.

Mr Trowbridge is a man of remarkable and varied ability. A poet of exceptional merit, he is also Vice-President of The Outlook Company, as well as first lieutenant in the Military Intelligence Reserve Corps. He is president of the Poetry Society of America and winner of the Lloyd McKim Garrison prize with his poem, "Conquest of the Air". Naturally, one expects and finds in his verse the convictions and philosophy of a man who knows life. He has experienced failure and success, has tasted the bitterness of tragedy, and has joyed in the warmth of achievement. His poetry is compelling and forceful, filled with a sublime beauty and tenderness that lifts it far into the realms of golden thought. His inmost yearnings, his very heart, he reveals in his reflections, settled deep in the mass of humanity. Seeing good in all things, harboring an eternal hope for life even in death,

he pours into his verse such optimism that the reader is transported from this time of depression into a land of "dreams and golden sheaves".

There is a strange and fascinating music in many of his poems, but Mr Trowbridge does not allow, as do so many of his contemporaries, his thought expression to be hampered by painful consideration of perfect metre. This is one of his secrets of success as a poet. Apparently through no effort his rhythm assumes evenness and softness. There is no complexity in his line structure, no jumbled mass of meaningless phrases. His word-pictures are graphic and clearcut, suggesting the immediate presence of the subject. Color and beauty envelop the gray fog of personal grief in a silvery mist of radiant happiness. He is not perfect, nor is he probably destined for immortality as a poetic genius, but he is worthy of the admiration shown him by modern poetry lovers. His sane verse, soothing in its translucent pureness, is heartily welcomed in this mad age of turmoil and delirium.

J. B. CLARK.

Bird of Evil

Albatross. By John Presland. New York: D. Appleton and Co. 1932. 388 pp. \$2.00.

This is the story of a stupendous failure made before the eyes of the world and, as a result, a man's intense struggle to regain his own self-respect, if not to vindicate himself entirely before society as a whole.

Beverley Johnson, after a most creditable record of public service, is placed in charge of an Antarctic expedition which is to explore the vast tracts south of the Great Ice Barrier by means of the huge airship Antarctica. After incredible ill-luck, comes the supreme test of Johnson's character, only to have him completely crack-up under the strain. He fails ignobly in his own sight,

as well as before the horrified and disgusted gaze of the entire civilized world.

As commander and sole survivor of the ill-fated expedition Johnson finds, upon his return to England and after his indictment for "grave dereliction of duty" by the Air Ministry, that there is no longer any place for him among decent people. Humiliation follows upon humiliation, he is despised and thwarted in every attempt to regain a foothold among his fellow-men.

It is only after the utmost effort and complete abasement, as well as a valiant refusal to take advantage of a cheap and easy way of escape from the situation through an advantageous marriage, that Johnson does finally win the approbation of his tiny rural world. However, he realizes that the albattross of his bitter failure is, even in his hour of triumph, still secure about his neck.

Undoubtedly the best portion of the book is that depicting life in the Antarctica. The immense quiet, the steady wind, the awful whiteness; all present a strange and eerie beauty as described by Mr Presland. The men accompanying Commander Johnson are convincingly portrayed—we learn to know them thoroughly as they move about their appointed tasks in the killing cold and raging blizzard.

The remainder of the book describing Johnson's life in England is rather prosy. It is too self-consciously teaching a lesson and pointing a moral. Truth is too obviously truth, and virtue is labelled *Virtue* in letters that are not to be misunderstood. The book lags and limps lamely along at this point while, I must confess, that at times one is even wickedly tempted to wonder if a single slip from the path of trustworthiness and dependability is sufficient cause for the sacrifice of a whole life in atonement.

LOUISE SMITH.

Bohemians in Satire

The Apes of God. By Wyndham Lewis. New York: Robert McBride & Co. 1932. 626 pp. \$3.00.

The latest book by that very profound Englishman, Mr Wyndham Lewis, will undoubtedly be the cause of much divergent opinion among the critics. The average reader after wading through its 626 pages (small print) will toss it aside and ask himself just what the mess is all about. A smaller group—very much smaller, I fear—will, as has happened in England, stoutly maintain that here is the finest satire since the days of Pope and Voltaire.

In *The Apes of God*, Mr Lewis has mercilessly pilloried the artistic dilettantes; the idle rich whose liking for the "Bohemian" life is in direct proportion to their lack of appreciation for things artistic. A group that "by adopting the life of the artist . . . have not learnt more about art, and they respect it less. With their more irresponsible 'bohemian' life they have left behind their 'responsibilities'—a little culture among the rest." After reading *The Apes of God* one suspects that Mr Lewis himself was formerly a member of—if he is now entirely divorced from—the group he so violently satirizes. His voice, it seems to me, is that of one suddenly satiated with his own particular milieu.

The characters encountered are crazily distorted puppets which the author with savage gloating dissects for the questionable enjoyment of the reader. There is Dan, possessor of numerous pathological idiosyncrasies, supremely confident that he is a genius, although just what genius may be Dan is never quite sure. And the scoffing Zagreus, a self-proclaimed enemy of the Apes of God, but who himself is of the breed. There is Kannute, the Finnish poet, and the Osmundians, a family of literary charlatans. The list could be multiplied indefinitely. None of the characters are even remotely

tinged with reality. They are wooden; too obviously puppets.

"Lord Osmund's Lenten Party" is undoubtedly the most effective part of the book. Here the reader catches a glimpse of a large number of the more flagrant Apes gathered together under one roof. Mr Lewis skillfully shows the intrinsic vacuity of the pseudo-artistic crew; their inane conversation, their lack of purpose, and their obvious and futile attempts at profundity. In a chapter titled Lesbian-Ape, a touch reminiscent of Rabelais creeps in when Dan wanders into the wrong studio and is forced to pose for the occupant, a Lesbian dauber.

Mr Lewis's literary style does not lend itself to superficial reading. In addition, numerous Anglicisms, at first quite incomprehensible to the American, are present on practically every page. The result is a volume necessitating a close study. To the reader possessing ample time and, above all, the power of concentration, the book is recommended.

L. J. CLARK.

THE PRINCE OF FRENCH BIOGRAPHERS:
ANDRÉ MAUROIS

(Continued from Page 12)

"What would you consider the most important essential of a good biographer?" I asked.

"The most important thing, according to my opinion, is following a strictly chronological order. Plutarch has set a bad example for over two thousand years. He gives the deeds of his heroes, and then at the close of his account collects those anecdotes which illustrate character. This is wrong, I think. For couldn't we understand the action of a man much better if we knew at the beginning of his story some details about his charac-

ter? Personal anecdotes should be arranged in chronological order, not saved and brought out like a will only when the man is dead."

The account of this visit to André Maurois can fittingly close with the greeting he so kindly sent to his fellow members of the International Mark Twain Society.

"It would be good if nations as well as individuals would try to acquire a sense of humor. Wisdom, laughter, and peace are friends."



April and May Issues

The April issue will contain a study of the ten-year-plan in North Carolina by Struthers Burt, an article by Archibald Henderson of the University of North Carolina, and studies of campus problems by Duke students.

The May issue will be edited by aspirants for the Editorship for the year 1932-33.

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Comments from Readers and Contributors

(By including these comments from readers and contributors the editorial staff has departed somewhat from its policy. However the editors believe that taken as they are from both the lowly and the great the interest they hold justifies their inclusion here.)

PAUL GREEN: But again, let me say that I believe the business of a college magazine is to stimulate student contributions, not to draw on those long long ago stimulated.

ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN: I am very proud indeed to be asked to contribute to your splendid magazine. I think that it is one of the most interesting experiments of the times, and wish it all success.

R. P. HARRISS, Editor 1925-26: As father of that interesting if doubtful venture, the "new" ARCHIVE, I naturally cannot refuse to do what I frequently called upon others to do—contribute.

VIRGINIA STAIT: I must send you a congratulatory line on the last ARCHIVE. It is a splendid number and I have read it from Alpha to Omega.

A. T. WEST: The last ARCHIVE was the best example of college creative literary work that I have seen in all my college experiences.

ANY NUMBER OF UNDERGRADUATES: The ARCHIVE is lousy. But the Jean Harlow covers weren't so bad.

The ARCHIVE

EDITORIAL STAFF: Ovid W. Pierce, Jr., *Editor*; Elizabeth Bulluck, *Co-ed Editor*; J. B. Clark, *Book Review Editor*; Marshall Pritchett, *Associate Editor*.

ART STAFF: Curtis Spence, Preston Moses, Ethel Williams, Laura Jean McAdams.

BUSINESS STAFF: W. Alfred Williams, *Business Manager*; Elisabeth Rouse, *Co-ed Business Manager*; Nicholas Orem, Willie States, *Assistant Business Managers*.

VOLUME XLIV

APRIL, 1932

NUMBER 7

A Monthly Literary Review Published by the Students of Duke University, at Durham, North Carolina.

The publication of articles on controversial topics does not necessarily mean that the Editor or the University endorses them.

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This issue of THE ARCHIVE is edited by Mr. J. B. Clark and Mr. Marshall Pritchett, aspirants for the editorship for the year 1932-33.

The May issue will contain the article by Archibald Henderson, announced in the March issue. The article will contain hitherto unpublished documents pertaining to the balloon ascension in Philadelphia in 1793.



EDGEWORTH

Smoking Tobacco

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a Generation"

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Frontispiece	Laura Jean McAdams 4
Miss McAdams, whose sketches have appeared in previous issues of the ARCHIVE, is a graduate student in Latin.	
Editorial	M. P. 5
Mr Pritchett is associate editor of the ARCHIVE.	
Black Romance (<i>fiction</i>)	Rivers McCall 7
Mr McCall, a graduate of Wofford College, was in the graduate school of Duke University during the year 1927-28. At present, he is living in Florence, S. C. His stories dealing with the Southern negro have been widely read.	
Song (<i>verse</i>)	May Folwell Hoisington 13
Mrs Hoisington, who has been a consistent contributor to the ARCHIVE for a number of years, is a nationally known poetess. She lives in Rye, N. Y.	
Song To A Hillside (<i>verse</i>)	David Cornel DeJong 13
Mr DeJong's poetry and short stories have appeared in such magazines as <i>Pagany</i> , <i>Poetry</i> , <i>Harper's</i> , and <i>Scribner's</i> . His editorial, "About Culture at Duke," which appeared in the March issue of the ARCHIVE, has received much comment.	
Keats (<i>drama</i>)	J. B. Clark 14
Mr Clark is book review editor of the ARCHIVE.	

Modern Poetry (*essay*) Walter A. Cutter 21

Mr Cutter, who is making his first appearance in the ARCHIVE, is a graduate student at Duke University.

Reflection (*verse*) Tom Carriger 24

Mr Carriger has had many poems published. He is an undergraduate in the School of Religion.

Book Reviews

Tragic America Charles E. Landon 25

Mr Landon is a member of the Economics department of Duke University. His writings appear at various times in important publications.

Malaisie A. T. West 26

Professor West is director of dramatics at Duke University. He is retiring president of the North Carolina Dramatic Association.

City Block F. K. Mitchell 26

Professor Mitchell, a member of the English department of Duke University, is a former Rhodes scholar and present chairman of the Rhodes Scholarship Committee of this district.

Horse in the Moon J. B. Clark 27

Tobacco Road F. K. Mitchell 28



“... he ain’ no king in dis hyuh lan’; he’s jus’ a nigguh. . . .”

—*Black Romance*. By Rivers McCall.

The ARCHIVE

April, 1932

Vol. XLIV

No. 7

EDITORIAL

About Culture at Duke: A Reply

IF WE are to accept Mr. David Cornel DeJong's remarks "About Culture at Duke," an editorial which appeared in the March issue of THE ARCHIVE, there is very little more that can be said on the subject. A review in the *Chronicle* of March 23 states that "he has treated facetiously that which he thinks deserves facetious treatment." Do not let us dismiss so worthy a subject with jocose conclusion. It is just possible that Mr. DeJong has in mind a classical idea of culture when he says, "Let us ignore the title. Frankly, there isn't any—culture, of course." Culture must be made to prevail if we would translate its meaning into something tangible.

If the America of today can lay claim to existing conditions of culture, they are of a decidedly different brand than those existent on the Continent, the origin of culture, and therefore cannot be judiciously governed by the same standards. We are fully cognizant that it has become trite to suggest

that America is a land of opportunity, which actually means reasonably equal chances for individuals to amass fortunes. And we must confess to ourselves that the average American is primarily interested in acquiring a comfortable income. This has become increasingly difficult since the recognized equality of man has invited constant competition. As a result, one's leisure has become greatly limited. In contrast, the old order of things has not been radically changed on the Continent. Money is not rapidly exchanged. Comfortable living is either assured or there is no hope of it, depending, of course, upon class distinction. Leisure time is utilized to its best advantage, and that advantage means to the European the development of culture, or to use the words of Matthew Arnold, "a disinterested endeavor after perfection." Obviously, what we Americans lack is the ability to make our leisure count for something finer, better, and more useful to ourselves.

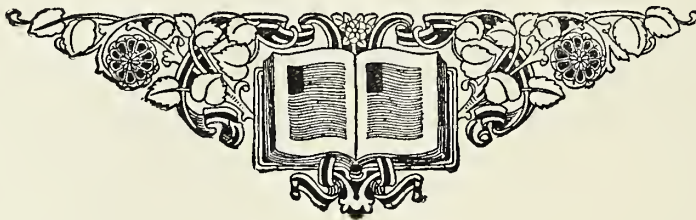
But returning to our own sphere, we must admit that an attempt to disprove any one of Mr. DeJong's statements concerning the behavior of Duke students would prove futile. They are true and yet, are conditions at Duke strikingly unfortunate in comparison with other American universities of similar standing? If they are, then all hope must be relinquished for future acquisition of refinement. On the other hand, everything points to an attainment of the highest type of American culture. Such an attainment must be accomplished gradually. Surely the expression that "we are in a period of great transition" has gathered enough momentum and assurance to remove all doubt. There is still hope. One method worthy of consideration is a more discerning selectivity of students, for surely some background is essential to a student's appreciation of the finer things of life. A keener interest in music, art, literature, the theatre should be earnestly

encouraged by those who have the respect of the students. The mutual advantage of the intellectual association of students and faculty other than in class room or lecture hall should be realized.

Mr. DeJong has hinted that there are exceptions, that there are those among us who are cultured. This is without a doubt true, but perfection of the individual is not so much to be desired as perfection of the community, the country, the race. Much, however, depends on the influence of those who have attained culture, and fear of ridicule will be a barrier to overcome in our community. The revolt against grossness will not necessarily mean the tarnish of now existent culture unless, as Montesquieu offers, "culture is the desire of an intelligent being to become more intelligent." In that case, the self-sacrifice would be too great for those who believe in this selfish concept.

Again, there is still hope.

M. P.



Black Romance

By RIVERS McCALL

LAUGHLIN Cawdor was the only man in Pee Dee country who bought slaves direct from the outlaw traders. After the first decade of the eighteenth century their importation was forbidden by South Carolina laws, which did not mean that they were no longer secretly landed. The Federal law of 1820, making slave trading the equivalent of piracy, did place a serious check on the trade, but no matter what stringent precautions were taken the running went on in a small way up to 1860.

The profit of the venture was enormous, especially after the wholesale cultivation of cotton began creating, as it did, an urgent need for field hands. The merchant who succeeded in marketing a ship load went away with a heavy ballast of silver, enough reward to warrant his risking his ship and his skin. Several successful runs would net a fortune.

Since very respectable people wanted it, the traffic was winked at. The smugglers had their regular places of call at many a secluded inlet along the Southern Atlantic Coast and an organized method of disposing of their wares. Their own agents handled the sale of the negroes, oftentimes far inland. Wealthy planters, whom the agents could trust, sometimes found

their way to the rendezvous to buy the choicest bits of flesh.

Laughlin Cawdor was one of these. Otherwise a law-abiding citizen, he entered into this risky business partly for its pure adventure and partly from sound economy. There were all kinds of "niggers," one man oftentimes being able to do the work of two. Picking his own from among hundreds he was able to assemble an exceptionally sturdy lot.

There was some difficulty in training them; indeed oftentimes none of his other bondsmen, themselves only a short time from Africa, could communicate with the newcomers. However, there were all kinds of ways to do farm work and a new man, when properly taught, had not the insurmountable difficulty of forgetting former shoddy methods. The trouble of instruction more than paid for itself in the consequent expertness of the pupils. Cawdor had what was for his day a model plantation.

Once or twice a year he surreptitiously slipped away from his plantation, carrying with him a couple of trusted overseers and a few sturdy oarsmen. Into the long dugouts that he kept moored on the Great Pee Dee they loaded extra paddles and a large store of provisions and slipped away downstream. Somewhere in the cov-

ert reaches of Winyah Bay, off Georgetown, they met the slave ship and drove their bargain for the precious contraband.

Treating the savages to a hearty feed, they made them man the paddles and drive the dugouts slowly back up the river. At night one of the white men stood guard over the exhausted bodies on their new-made beds of branches. At sunrise the camp was broken and the watchman stretched himself in the bottom of the boat for his tardy slumber. The blacks finding themselves again in their native element of river and forest and lulled into comparative security by the satisfaction of full bellies, forgot the stinking ship with its miserable confinement and chattered gaily among themselves. The great adventure had already lost its worst aspects.

On a notable trip to the coast he brought back the girl, Namah, a present for his pretty, well-loved young wife. The neighbors who saw her about the house afterward declared her the finest woman in the country side. Many of the planters, some perhaps in the itch of lechery, tried to buy her.

She was tall, and strong, with broad shoulders and sturdy, well formed limbs. Her face, dark brown rather than black had regular, distinctly non-negroid features, marked by the light of unusual intelligence. Her movements were quick and lithe; her carriage proud and not a little insolent. Only long oval breasts and kinky hair prevented her being taken for a sun-burned Caucasian.

The mistress was delighted at the present her husband had brought. She planned happily to train the girl as her maid, and if the need arose, as she hoped, in the next year or so, as a nurse. A quick, trusted servant would guarantee her many an extra hour of ease, the birthright of a planter's lady. Other women would envy her the possession of so fine a serving-woman.

But her own pride and her husband's quickly turned to trepidation when the girl took permanently to her bed in an outhouse in a mad fit of nostalgia. She would not face the sun of this strange new land nor touch the food that was proffered her. Neither persuasion, nor force nor whipping would move her out of her sickness of mind. The country doctor called but could offer no remedy for home-sickness. The girl grew thin and wan, lying face downward on her bunk. Laughlin concluded that he had thrown his money away.

Then an odd thing happened. A pointer bitch, the master's favorite dog, crept into the girl's room and littered on a pile of clothes at the foot of her bed. When morning came, a crowd of tiny, shut-eyed puppies crawled and whined around the spent mother. Downy, groping things, such was the charm of their diminutiveness, and appeal of their helplessness, that no soul however hardened or distraught could help but yearn toward them.

The girl, taking care to make friends with the bitch, picked up one of the puppies and cooed over it. Nearly all day she sat up, watching

the new-born, and helping the weak, blind creatures to find their way to the fountains that nourished them.

That evening she ate the food that the mistress sent her and in a few days was completely normal again.

When the mistress showed her a worn but pretty house dress and made her understand that it was hers, she broke out in exclamations of delight. Putting it on, she strutted past the mammy in the kitchen in open disdain.

In the days following, she trailed the white woman about the house going into ecstasy over each new, beautiful article that she beheld. Her mistress, when the girl had admired, would point at it, name it, and make the girl repeat its name. When she played the piano, Namah almost swooned with delight. Every day afterward she would take her mistress tenderly by the hand and lead her over to the instrument. Mrs. Cawdor remarked frequently on her delight at the girl's behavior, declaring that she had a far keener sense of beauty than most of the white people she knew.

Sometimes Namah would slip little articles that she admired away to her own room, but the proper severity soon cured her of that habit. Miraculously fast she learned household words and talk, together with the trifling tasks required of her.

Touches of nostalgia came on her at times, but her new life had proved too rife with sensation for much allowance of grief over a distant existence that was after all not half so pleasant. Playing her easy part on

this strange new stage engrossed her.

When the mistress began to exhibit signs of pregnancy, Namah's wonder grew into a kind of reverence. Mar'se Laughlin had told her to take extra good care of his lady, a responsibility that she accepted religiously. Her natural wonder at the miracle of motherhood grew into awe apparently at the thought that this frail beautiful white woman should experience the same agony and subsequent joy that was the lot of all women. She wondered if one so physically unsubstantial would not bear a child that was more spirit than body.

To the other household servants and the laborers with whom she occasionally came in contact, she boasted proudly of the lady's rotundity and the heir that was soon to come, speaking of it as tenderly as if it had been her own. Both mother and child were her particular charges.

The miracle did come to pass—a fine healthy boy to delight the father's soul. Namah held it, crooned over it, and secretly offered it her own milkless breast. As the mother lay abed with weakness for months afterward, the baby was entrusted largely to her care. The real mother could not have been more passionately attached. When Mrs. Cawdor mended, Namah was loth to give up her share of the infant's care.

Laughlin Cawdor congratulated himself on having picked out such a matchless domestic.

When the baby was a year and a half old, Mrs. Cawdor began to go go about again, either leaving the

child with Namah, or taking them both along. So it happened that when the master of the house proposed a merry-making trip to Charleston, the girl was included in their plans. They would go to the city, which was then the metropolis of the South, visit friends and see the sights of a world-port.

The carriage ride, the only way of reaching the city by land, was soon completed and the country folk plunged into the life of the town with the zest that accompanies a rare occasion. They went everywhere, inspecting the waterfront and the ships, where they could never persuade Namah to go, buying at great stores, and visiting in proud houses, secure behind their iron-work gates.

There was even a circus in town, a puny affair, but a wonder to the untraveled people of the day. To this, one morning, the visitors went.

The crowd was dense and it was with some difficulty that they got near the cages to look in wonder at the lively monkeys, the lazy bear that small boys were trying to provoke to anger, a wildcat pacing restlessly to and fro, and several other small exhibitions. Namah, carrying the baby, peered at them all, eagerly, familiarly. Always she crowded forward to see what was next.

Suddenly she almost threw the child whom she had nursed so faithfully into the mother's arms, turned, pushing her way roughly through the crowd, and dashed toward the other end of the tent. As she went, she screamed unintelligible words. The

crowds parted, thinking her a maniac.

Laughlin and his wife, alarmed and greatly displeased, followed as fast as possible. Using his cane, he gradually made their way into the center of the throng that had gathered. There kneeling with out-stretched arms almost at the feet of two camels the circus boasted, looking up at them with streaming eyes, she poured out her native babble, interspersed with moans of pain.

"Namah, what is the matter," Laughlin asked sharply.

She paid him not the slightest attention. Angrily he shook her by the shoulder, repeating imperatively his inquiry.

She looked up apologetically, quieted, but seemed at a loss for words in which to explain. In an instant, however, she sobbed out:

"My far-away-country horses!"

It was shortly after this, that on another secret trip down to Winyah, Laughlin made his second notable purchase.

This time he brought back a great, black man who looked on every one he met, white or colored, with a venomous contempt, tossing his head in pride when given an order. On the boat trip up they had been able to make him understand or do little, except that he did join in the paddling with a mighty stroke. Always he remained aloof, holding council with no one, viewing everything about him with haughty indifference.

His glistening skin stretched smoothly over great heaps of sinew, except where on his breast and both

cheeks there were knife wounds. His head was habitually held high in the air, his chin tilted at a belligerent angle. He had evidently learned on ship-board that it was unwise to get stubborn or rough, but his hatred of his captors still appeared in his every action. He was an unwilling captive, of whom anything might be expected.

He was carried out under two overseers, well-armed against violence, into the field where sugar cane was being cut. Fortunately a negro had been found that could communicate with him. He was ordered to explain to the new man what was required of him and to show him how to wield the knife. This he did at length, in a strange jargon.

The big fellow stood up with his head in the air and hardly so much as noticed what the man was doing and saying, frowning fiercely. Presently one of the white men placed the knife in his hand, pointed to the cane and ordered him to get to work. He threw down the blade, and very clearly and distinctly muttered something at them. All the other laborers stopped work to watch.

"What did he say?" one of the men asked the other negro.

"He say he 'King'; King doan' work."

"Lawdy, Lawd! Lissen tuh de nigguh," an old woman cried, "he ain't no king in dis hyuh lan'; he's jus' a nigguh," and they all burst out laughing.

One of the white men carefully got the knife out of reach and then pulled

a short whip out of his belt. The other picked up a club.

"Tell him he'll have to work or we'll beat his hide off," the man said, brandishing the whip.

The interpreter quickly relayed the message and added persuasive words of his own about the horrors of that whip. The big black glanced at it as if he had known its use many times.

Without further ado, he reached for the knife and set to work, watching the whites from the corner of his eye. For a long time they remained on the alert.

Presently they moved on to another part of the farm, leaving the "king" chopping away at the lush purple stalks. An hour later one of them came back along to find him gone. Nowhere was there a glimpse of him to be had.

The negroes pointed toward the woods. Taking the interpreter along, the overseer rapidly made in that direction. His tense face showed that he feared the worst.

There on the edge of the timber, lying full length on the ground in the broiling sun they found him. Across his forehead and the greater part of his face lay a heavy log. His body was inert like a corpse.

"Move that log!" the overseer cried.

Together they lifted it away. The prone man slowly opened his eyes and looked at them. He was to all appearances uninjured. His gaze calm and resigned.

"Ask him what the hell's the matter."

The two negroes held a short colloquy.

"He say he wanta die," was the answer.

Eventually Mingo became the best workman on the plantation, but never did he lose his appearance of resentment. Even with the other negroes he was aloof and domineering. In no time he came to be the recognized master of them all. When he deigned to speak to them, he expected to be obeyed and was.

Only when he started after their wives did they challenge his superiority. Apparently he had come to think of the people clustered in the log cabins around him as new subjects, to be done with as he wished. When he took a fancy to one of the women, he merely suggested to her that she pay him a nocturnal visit. If she accepted, he embraced her briefly and sent her back; if she did not come, and satyriasis stung him hard enough, he went after her. Several nasty quarrels resulted from his boldness.

Eventually the other men organized a sort of husband's protective association so that the irate husband could signal to his neighbors for help against the philanderer. This, together with a complaint to the master which earned Mingo a severe whipping, stopped his erotic marauding. After that he had to content himself with the tom-cattling he could effect in secret.

Of course, Laughlin Cawdor intended to pair him with some particular woman when a suitable one was available. Breeding the negroes was

an interesting and profitable diversion. With the proper wife, a strong buck would raise a valuable crowd of children. Of course, with the lack of constancy among them to contend with, breeding was necessarily a hit-or-miss proposition, but occasionally marital ties held, and anyhow it was worth trying.

As a matter of fact, the master proposed to mate Mingo with the girl Namah, as soon as her responsibilities as nurse lessened with the growth of his son. He had pointed the two of them out with pride to male visitors on the plantation, confiding his project for the pair. Indeed their union had become his pet scheme. The offspring would be of incalculable value.

When he broached the matter of partly giving up the girl to his wife, however, he met with unexpected opposition. She had grown greatly attached to the girl. Namah was not an ordinary woman, she exclaimed, the project was most inhumane.

"But I will have them properly married!" Laughlin protested.

"But they hardly know each other!" his wife countered.

Rather than override the mistress' wishes, though privately he considered her rather sentimental, he decided to effect his design by craft. He would simply have them brought into constant contact and let things take care of themselves. Namah had turned up her nose at all the other men on the plantation, but this new buck, he conjectured, was just the one to catch

(Continued on page 29)

Song

By MAY FOLWELL HOISINGTON

Love was my lover many years. Now song
Has superseded him and stays my friend;
He guides me through my waning autumn's end,
Pipes dancing tunes to fallen leaves that throng
Under my Tree of Life. We move along
Song's sunset paths, tasting the joys that lend
Their quiet happiness, through days that blend
Sweet honey from the nectary of wrong.

Song is the Great Physician of the soul,
Cleansing the heart of blackened bitterness
Where love once turned the knife within my brain.
No scar shows red, for song has made me whole,
Healing the wound with melody's caress,
Weaving a garland from the flowers of pain.

Song To A Hillside

By DAVID CORNEL DEJONG

And whose delicate walking
shall come here aside, mint-leaf,
aster, pert in his cape a junco
tilting his slate in cloudless
broad white, the thorn sharp-warm
on the fingertips and
nonconcern wild from the eyes
and lips? Who
wild with the lips?

There are none weather-soft tongued,
none wild for your showers.
Smoke plumes grey from the stacks
the city feasts its iron hours
the day is loud.

Keats

By J. B. CLARK

CAST

KEATS, the poet
SEVERN, his friend
GERALD, a youth

ROSA, a landlady
THE DOCTOR

TIME: A winter evening: twilight

PLACE: An Italian city: Keats' room

(Including a sonnet from Bernbaum's "Anthology of English Romanticism")

[THE SCENE: *The room is very small and neatly but comfortably furnished, all suggesting the antiquity of long usage. The walls are of wood and clean and covered with a few sketchings. There is a door (left) leading to the outer hall and stairway, and another in the center that is an entrance to the one remaining room of the apartment. A window (rear left) is between the two doors and overlooks the shore of the sea below. Beneath it is a little bench covered with faded plush. Musty green draperies are arranged exactly over the window and center door. A bright beam of sunlight pours in through the open window and serves to offset the more sombre aspects of the room. A bed, with muddled bed linen as if recently occupied, is in the right corner, and by its head rests a table on which are various medicines, a water pitcher and a glass. Arranged close to the right wall is a meagre and battered book shelf containing a few worn volumes. An ancient piano is down center from the window bench. Down left center stands a writing desk covered with sundry papers and quills. In a chair by this desk sits John Keats, the broken poet. His face is haggard and worn, bearing signs of the tragic pathos and inward grief that is slowly claiming his life. He is miserably thin and clad only in a very old and tattered robe which he, at intervals, pulls closer about him as if for extra protection against a biting chill. At times he coughs—a harsh, racking cough that appears to consume his whole being in its far reaching pain. Only his eyes, glowing with the beauty and passion of a divine genius, illumine his features and offset slightly the sallowness of his complexion. His black, curly hair is long and hangs down on his shoulders, as the brilliant flood of light from the window falls full on its jettiness and is reflected in its glistening sparkle of blackness. Reclined on the little*

wall bench and with elbows placed on the sill, the youth, Gerald, is gazing thoughtfully through the window, intently listening to the beat of the distant surf. He is a boy—apparently eighteen and frail and delicate, although darkly handsome. His is the poetic beauty with the transcending touch of immortal tenderness and worship in his face. It is nearing twilight of a late February day, yet the beam of the bright sunlight would indicate otherwise were it not for the Italian setting. Keats is seated at the table, pen in hand, slowly reflecting and writing. He begins to cough, lays his pen aside, rises, and goes to the table where he stops the cough with a drink of water. He turns to Gerald.]

KEATS: Is it there yet?

GERALD (*without turning*): No, Keats. I hear only the song of the lark and the far off cry of sea gulls.

KEATS: The lark sings of death and peace.

GERALD: The lark sings of life and freedom.

KEATS (*coming to Gerald*): You are young and cannot know, my friend. Some day you will understand.

GERALD (*turning to Keats*): Your youth is eternal, Keats. 'Tis wrong to speak of ugly death.

KEATS (*shaking his head*): Ugly death! You thus designate my one escape. Oh, Gerald, 'twill be a peace—an unawakening sleep for me. I only pray for the time to come—to hear once more the nightingale singing without my window—to know my work is done—my rest is won.

GERALD (*clutching Keats' hand*): Don't speak like that. You must live—for your art—for those who worship you—love you.

KEATS (*sadly*): For those who worship—love me. 'Tis a crude jest, Gerald, a mockery that is sealed in my heart. My eyes see only too well that I have failed. My works are scoffed

at and condemned—my name ignored. (*He turns aside and walks slowly to the desk. He gazes for a moment at the unfinished work thereon, then takes it in his hand and crumples it, casting it on the floor. He lifts up his hands and closes his eyes.*) Oh, God, God, would that you had claimed this wretched flesh when first it felt the pulse of life. I must not live, my heart cries out for deliverance, for escape from all this horror—this agony!

(*He is consumed with a fit of coughing and bends limply, with hand tightly clinching, over the table. Gerald runs to him.*)¹

GERALD: Come, Keats, lie down. You are worn out.

(*He leads Keats to the bed, places him on it comfortably, and tenders him a glass of water and a few drops of medicine. Keats drinks and appears more rested.*)

GERALD (*sitting on the bed by his side*): The doctor has warned you of such strains, Keats. You know it is dangerous. Why do you persist in it?

KEATS (*weakly*): I know I cannot curb the will of my soul. I have lived too long, I cannot endure more sorrow, and I shall die. Yes, that is it—I shall die, die—

(*His voice dwindles into an indistinct mumbling and Gerald becomes frightened. He takes him in his arms.*)

GERALD: Keats, open your eyes and look at me. Speak to me—speak to me, Keats!

(*The door at the left opens and Severn with the doctor enters. Severn is a young man nearing his thirties. He is tall and dark, and his face betrays the genius of his character. The doctor is middle-aged, of portly build, and of kind expression. They stop as Gerald turns to them.*)

GERALD (*imploringly*): It's Keats—he's—Oh, Severn, he's dying.

(*Severn rushes to the bed.*)

DOCTOR (*at his side*): If you please, I believe he will respond more quickly to my efforts.

(*He feels of Keats' heart, shakes his head, and measures a dose of medicine from the table.*)

DOCTOR (*shaking his head*): This is his severest stroke yet. I fear that it will prove fatal.

SEVERN: Horrible—he must not die.

(*The doctor administers the dose to Keats who takes it, but shows no other sign of consciousness.*)

DOCTOR: I cannot understand his case, Severn. Lung disease, naturally, is a common ailment and well known to the medical profession, but why he shows signs of retardation daily, why he steadily sinks lower, even when faithfully following my instruction, is a puzzle.

GERALD: He does not want to live. He prayed for death.

SEVERN: It is only too true. I have thought that Italy would change his outlook and produce in him a new desire for creative labor, but he is so completely dominated by the one thought of escape in death that he refuses to accept any improvement efforts.

DOCTOR: I am sorry, for that makes cure virtually impossible. If he refuses to help himself, it is beyond the power of science to do so. (*He goes to the door.*) There is nothing more I can do now, and you already have my previous instructions. Carry them out completely, see that his food is limited for a while to no more than anchovy and a piece of toast, and above all, keep him as quiet as possible. You may expect me again tomorrow. Good evening. (*He goes out.*)

SEVERN: Goodby. (*He walks to the window musing.*) It is beyond the power of science. (*He turns to Gerald.*) You were with Keats when it happened, Gerald?

GERALD (*who is stroking Keats forehead*): Yes, he and I were alone. I shall never forget it.

SEVERN: What disturbed him this time?

GERALD: I don't know. It was all so strange. He kept asking me 'Is it there yet,' meaning a nightingale outside our window. Keats knows there are no nightingales in Italy's winter.

SEVERN (*gazing out the window*): Yes, Keats knows there are no nightingales here, but he also knows *there will be one soon*.

GERALD: I do not understand, Severn.

SEVERN: It is not for us to understand, Gerald. Only poor Keats, matchless genius that he is, would believe in it. When his mother was dying he stayed by her side through the long black hours of the night. As dawn neared she passed away with his hand clasped in hers. He was stunned and stood motionless there alone with her, when from somewhere distant he heard a nightingale singing. So impressed was he in his grief that he has carried that memory with him since childhood, ever believing it an omen—ever hoping that it will be a herald of his own passing. Many is the time he has talked to me of it—vowed his belief in it; so when it does come, I shall know and believe also, and perhaps smile a bit sadly for him. *(He looks toward Keats.)*

GERALD: It is beautiful even in its tragedy.

(There is a knock on the door at the left.)

SEVERN: Who is it?

LANDLADY *(outside)*: It's Rosa. I have brought food for the sick man.

(Severn opens the door, and Rosa, a very old woman of greasy and swarthy appearance, carrying a tray, comes in and places it on the medical table.)

SEVERN: Thank you, Rosa, but we shall have no need of that. The doctor has limited our friend considerably.

ROSA: Oh, that is bad! He is so little—so white. Is there not something I can do?

SEVERN: I know of nothing, Rosa. We all must wait and hope.

GERALD *(at the window)*: The sun is sinking swiftly now, Severn. Soon the stars will come out, and the birds will hush, and there will only be then the roar of the waves to mar the silence and his slumber.

(A church bell, far off, rings. It is the Angelus and Rosa makes the sign of the cross. Gerald and Severn stand in silence. The light is fading to a deep rose and the room is becoming quite dim. The bell continues to ring softly.)

SEVERN: I shall be frank with you, Rosa. Keats is a dying man, dying of an infectious disease. Please do not be alarmed. You shall not suffer in any way, for, when he leaves, I shall destroy all the furnishings of this room and pay you for everything. I thought it better to tell you—you are so kind.

ROSA: No, No, Senor. Not I, but you.

(She kisses his hand and goes out at the left. Severn walks to the desk, sees the crumpled paper on the floor, and picks it up. He opens it and attempts to read.)

SEVERN: My, how dark it has grown. There is a bit of candle in the other room. Do you mind, Gerald?

GERALD: Of course, I'll get it. It somehow may revive our spirits. *(He goes out at right center.)*

(Severn walks down to Keats' bed. Suddenly through the silence Keats speaks.)

KEATS *(weakly)*: Is that you, Severn?

SEVERN *(sinking to his side)*: Yes,

John, this is Severn. How are you? Are you better?

KEATS: No, I'm worse, Severn. This is the end—I'm dying!

SEVERN: No, John, no. Not that—you musn't. You must live—live.

KEATS: Live? Why?

SEVERN: Because of yourself—because of Fanny.

KEATS: That is why I must not. She must forget me—find someone else. She could never be happy with me as I am.

SEVERN: Not as you are, perhaps, but as you will be. Keats, you must fight to live for her.

KEATS: I fight—I—*(He goes into a spell of coughing and places his hand to his mouth. Severn pours him water. Keats is very weak.)* A towel, Severn, please. *(Severn gets a towel from the table and hands it to Keats. Keats presses it to his mouth and extends it to Severn.)*

KEATS: This is arterial blood—I cannot be deceived—I must die.

(Gerald enters with the lighted candle which he places on the desk. He turns to the bed.)

GERALD: Severn, come and see the moon in the east. It is pulsing and warm with life.

SEVERN: Keats is awake, Gerald.

(Gerald is surprised and speechless.)

KEATS *(softly)*: Come here, boy. Let me pick the stardust from your hair.

(Gerald runs to Keats and falls on his knees by the bedside.)

GERALD *(crying)*: He has spared

you. He has given you back to us. Thank God, thank God!

KEATS *(stroking his hair)*: The wind is cooling and my face burns. I can hear the surf beating far below, and can almost see the star sprinkled waters rolling—ever rolling towards the shore. It is a beautiful thing to leave.

GERALD: You shall not—you shall not.

SEVERN: The breeze—is it too strong for you, Keats?

KEATS: No, it is soothing and peaceful. I could work now if there were work to do. It would help me forget.

SEVERN: There is work to be done, Keats, work you have left unfinished. *(He hands Keats the crumpled paper and Keats smiles.)*

KEATS: Yes, I know. I could not think but now I am rested. I shall finish the sonnet. But I must ask you, Severn, first to look in "Chatterton's Volume" on the shelf, and take the letter that lies within its cover.

(Severn goes to the shelf, takes the letter from the book, and turns back to Keats.)

KEATS: Now read me the closing lines, please.

SEVERN *(reading)*: "As for myself I shall never know again the happiness and contentment that we shared together during the last summer you and I spent in England. I shall always hold you as the dearest of all comrades. Faithfully, Fanny." That is all, Keats.

KEATS *(in recollection)*: Yes, Severn, that is all. How I would love once more to hold her in my arms, to

watch the flicker of early morning stars in her eyes. But 'tis no more. I must forget—she must forget.

GERALD: The unfinished sonnet—you will complete it, Keats?

KEATS: Yes, I will finish it now. Take the paper and write as I compose, Gerald.

(The room has grown quite dark, illumined only by the faint glow of the candle which causes fantastic shadows of the characters to be cast on the walls. Gerald takes paper and prepares to write.)

KEATS: Read me the last lines I have written.

GERALD *(reading)*:

“No, yet still steadfast, still unchangeable

Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening breast.”

KEATS *(meditating)*:

“To feel forever its soft fall and swell,

Awake forever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender taken breath

And so live ever—”

(There is silence.)

KEATS *(completing)*: “—or else swoon to death.”

GERALD *(startled)*: No! Not that!

KEATS: Yes, just as you have it—that is right.

SEVERN *(coming to Keats)*: You are trembling, Keats. You are worse?

KEATS: No, I am better, Severn. I feel now that all is complete—that peace has come. Gerald, please read the sonnet aloud.

GERALD *(reading)*:

“Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art—

Not in lone splendor hung aloft the night

And watching, with eternal lids apart,

Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,

The moving waters at their priest-like task

Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,

Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask

Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—

No, yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,

Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening breast,

To feel forever its soft fall and swell,

Awake forever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender taken breath,

And so live ever—or else swoon to death.”

It is beautiful, Keats. I shall keep this copy for my own.

KEATS *(stroking Gerald's hair)*: Matchless youth! May that God who has all at His command some day fulfill your own hope of pouring forth your soul into verse. Your sonnet is my “Last Sonnet.”

SEVERN: Will you lie down and rest now, Keats? Rosa has brought food. You are not to have much. It would endanger you; but you must eat something. Probably a glass of milk or—

KEATS *(sadly)*: No, I am not hungry for food, Severn. I am content as

I am. I must talk—yes, that is it. You must talk to me, Severn. You went to the English cemetery as I asked?

SEVERN (*his eyes dimming with tears*): Yes, Keats, I went today.

KEATS: You must describe it—I must know what it is like.

SEVERN: It is a small place. Just within the wall stands the pyramid of Caius Cestius. Everywhere—all through the grass there are violets.

KEATS: I have always loved them. I shall stop fretting and have peace. I leave nothing to make my name remembered. Now you must promise me this—this last promise. On my grave you must put this epitaph—"Here lies one whose name was writ in water." Remember that, Severn. It is all I ask.

SEVERN (*consolingly*): I shall do that, Keats. I promise.

(*There is an instant of dramatic silence. Gerald goes to the window bench and sits down gazing out at the sea beyond. A gentle breeze wafts the curtains noiselessly into the room.*)

KEATS (*softly*): Have you ever seen anyone die, Severn?

SEVERN (*shaking his head*): No, Keats.

KEATS: Then I pity you, dear friend. But you must be strong. It will not last long, and then I shall be sleeping. Yes, O thank God for the quiet grave—for the cold earth—and the daisies bending and swaying over me! (*He starts to rise.*)

SEVERN: You must rest, Keats. Lie down.

KEATS: Yes, I shall rest and you shall play for me, Severn. Remember the ones we sang in England? (*Severn nods.*) Play that, Severn, and I shall lie here and dream of memories.

(*Severn rises and goes to the piano. He sits and begins to play. The music is very soft and sweet, carrying in its strain pictures of cool meadows and laughing youth. Keats is resting very quietly. Gerald still gazes through the window. Far above is seen the evening star.*)

GERALD (*softly*): "Bright star would I were steadfast as thou art—"

(*Suddenly, the song of a bird, loud and shrill, is heard above the music. Gerald starts and Severn rises and goes to his side. They both peer out.*)

SEVERN (*awed*): It has come—Keats' nightingale is here.

They are listening intently and the bird is singing quite near as

THE CURTAIN FALLS.



Modern Poetry

By WALTER A. CUTTER

SOME recent offerings in the February number of the ARCHIVE call for comment. The particular offerings referred to appeared under the misleading title, Poetry. The nature of these purported poems was such as to merit some critical attention for which, fortunately, I am unfitted by disposition as well as by desire. However, I should like to call attention to the fact that much that passes for poetry is not, by the wildest stretch of the most emancipated and zealous imagination, poetry at all. It is merely a meaningless jumble of helpless words cast into the concrete form of a poem by modern typographical processes, and quite divorced from the Muse in whose name these votive offerings appear.

There is not time here to develop a theory of poetry. Writing, as I am, for a competent public, I must assume that it has well-defined impressions of what poetry should be. But, in that eminent authority, Messrs. Funk and Wagnall's, these words may be discovered by the unwearied seeker: Poetry: The form of literature that embodies beautiful thought, feeling, or action, in rhythmical and (usually) metrical language; Poet: one especially endowed with imagination, the power of rhythmical or metrical expression, and the creative faculty or power of artistic construction. I re-

alize that my reputation is at stake in venturing to judge academic productions by the criterion of a desk dictionary (price \$5.95), but I am proposing to show that by this least technical and broadest definition, unrefined by the addition of critical subtleties, these purported poems (most of them) have been weighed in the balance and found to be—words.

First, may I say, there seems to be among the youthful moderns a decided revolt against the recognition of the varied beauties of life. Perhaps a good description of this age, poetically, would be The Seamy Age. Led by that most redoubtable leader, Monsieur Sandburg, with his *Chicago*,—"Hog butcher of the World," the loyal legions of the emancipated chant their blatant cacophonies to the echoing answer of their own applause. Naturally, the saccharine sentiments of the worst of the classical period are barred even from discussion, but I doubt strongly if even their worst offences would exceed this modern drivel which, like the peace of God, passes human understanding. If there was ever a time when physiological lacks, neurotic obsessions, half-digested thoughts, spurious and ill-defined feelings of revolt—against Heaven knows what—were translated into as equally meaningless and limping lines, this is it. But, to the poems!

These poems are similar in spirit to a great deal of modern poetry. I suppose, within limits, they may be understood as being fairly representative of modern verse, with both its strength and its defects. My chief criticism of modern verse, and that which appeared in the ARCHIVE as a part of it, is that the ideas are too fragmentary, granulated, incompletely thought out, and too casually expressed. Many of these poems may express a mood, or a passing thought, or some fanciful treatment of some subject, but the question remains as to whether this constitutes either poetry or abiding literature. That there are other opinions which forcibly maintain that it is poetry, I freely concede. I merely bring forward my own opinion.

I select two for special comment. There is the "Crow and the Serpent." This drama, I must admit, removed from the deficiencies of its expression, is very touching. But, expressed in the jargon of the knights of the road, stated with an almost premeditated casualness, conveying neither beauty nor grief on any element capable of long endurance, a mere snap-shot of a passing episode, is it poetry? Another one, lacking even the merit of the first is "Autumn Occurrence." One hardly knows what to say about a poem like this, if the golden key of understanding hasn't been put into his mind. Of course when an effusion like this is written and is absolutely unable through its expression to render itself intelligible to the public, the writer usually lays the blame upon the reader who can't quite come to it.

Now that is an allowable interpretation but one lacking in convincingness. I would as a principle of all written or oral expression that its first task is to make itself understood. It is not enough to feed one's literary vanity on the fact that something is so "mud-dily" expressed, that three days after it cannot be understood even by the writer. We, in this modern age, must get away from the naïve belief that the presence of such abfuscation guarantees literature. It doesn't and, I believe that it never will.

There are several redeeming features. "Spring Warning" is a delightful and appealing poem showing what is possible when one idea is welded to naturalness and beautifully expressed. So with "July Night" and "Music." But, for the most part, it is as I have said, and a rereading will convince one, very indifferent matter to put under such a euphonious title as that of poetry.

I rest the case! With the few exceptions noted, if it is poetry then I am the incarnation of the hanging gardens of Babylon. By no possible definition does it satisfy the demands of even passably decent poetry. Its beauty is lacking. Admitting that beauty is not the only aim of poetry, it must still be said that the grief lacks impressiveness and the net effect is anemic. It represents, as I have indicated, not music, but a setting down of haphazard impressions of whatever comes to mind under some obfuscating title. Perhaps I am too Victorian, although I regard much modern poetry in its freedom and ideational content

as astonishingly good. But, I grow weary of this continued cascade of jargon which gives us stones instead of bread. It is a tribute to charitable editors, but a sore trial and affliction to the reader. A person nods,—*ergo*, he is a dreamer; he is lazy; *ergo*, he is emancipated; he cuts classes, or any other minor things; *ergo*, he is in revolt; he is disappointed in love, food, or drink; *ergo*, he is possessed by a world sorrow of indefinite magnitude. At this stage he sits down to immortalize his internal aches and pains in the King's English, and, sooner or later, it shows up as poetry.

There is this to remember, that not everyone can write poetry. Some of us have tried and failed, thus proving the proposition above. It is no disgrace not to be able to write poetry. Prose still remains an elastic medium of expression in the hands of one who can use it. As long as certain individuals will dash into print without ever having subjected themselves to any kind of mental discipline, we will continue to have a great deal that isn't poetry. It is not enough to feel eman-

cipated and, in the glow of this feeling, to set down consecutively, some of the world-shaking pronouncements that pass in solemn parade through the mind. As one of the officers of this University once remarked, "So many persons think themselves emancipated when they are only unbuttoned."

Finally, there is form. A great many persons feel an aversion for the "confinement," the "fettering," the "limitations" of form, when what they mean is that they feel a disinclination to labor for the achievement of form. I would say this rather dogmatically, that there was never thought so deep, so beautiful, so true, that was not improved by the addition of the symmetry of form. To depart from the canons of any kind of form, to set down whatever shape pops into the mind, may have the tendency to satisfy the temporary desire, but it will never constitute abiding literature. There is a pithiness, a photographic likeness to objects, a brittle succinctness about much modern poetry, but once heard, it is, like our own sins, remembered no more.



Reflection

By TOM CARRIGER

I wonder—had I never before
Seen the sunlight
Would I not marvel at the
Quiet way
Of shadows slipping into
A hollowed nook,
Enfolding the glimmer
Of the rich, gleaming grass
With the soft forgetfulness
Of approaching night?

I wonder—had I never seen before
The silent tide of darkness
Slowly rise to the very stars
Enveloping the sharp outlines
Of a little home, sturdy tree,
And towering mountain
With the blurring
Sable sameness of sleep,
While far above were the stars—

Had I not lived all this before,
And should it come to me suddenly,
Would I not learn to
Dream; and to bow my head?

BOOK REVIEWS

Dreiser Oversteps His Bounds

Tragic America. By Theodore Dreiser. New York: Horace Liveright, Inc. 1931. 435 pp. \$2.00.

In this book Mr Dreiser champions the cause of labor against the vested interests. His main thesis throughout the book is that capitalism has been a complete failure in America. "I maintain that American business, in the large, is, and always has been, carried on by force. I decry the entire system as far too backward for present needs, and far too uncivilized for the present-day stage of organized society. Today's capitalistic method of conducting society is by no means the only way—he suggests a new system similar to the present Russian system)—and I am convinced that it is not the best way. The fundamental principle—that all of the necessities resulting from the comparatively advanced stage of invention which has been attained should be given to all people equitably for their services or labor—has been, in the main disregarded. . . . In short, the banks and corporations not only spend enormous sums of money to keep down developments in government to aid the people in general, but when one such movement arises anywhere, they use any outrageous form of political or financial coercion—brute force, really—to smash it." As an illustration he cites the case of the non-partisan league in North Dakota.

The author claims that he entered this contest because the capitalists are trying to enslave the people and to do it are "first seeking to debase it mentally." Education, he states, "is stunted because it cannot speak the truth and hence cannot even seek understanding." In keeping with this idea, his chapter "A Suggested Phase of Education"

is probably the best in the book. Here he maintains that the masses do not know the basis of organized society and that their education should consist more of finding out the nature of this organization of which they are a part. They should know more of their responsibilities to society and its responsibilities to them rather than being given so many dogmatic and biased ideas which, he thinks, are given only to keep the capitalists in power.

Mr Dreiser, however, shows a lack of knowledge or only a superficial knowledge of many of the points which he tries to cover. And it is not likely that anyone of his attainments could know thoroughly the wide selection of subjects which he attempts to cover. One instance is the operation of the railways by the government during the war. He claims that this operation was a complete financial success. The records show that a deficit of approximately a billion dollars was incurred. The government, however, operated the railways to move wartime traffic and took the attitude that a part of the cost of operation should be written off as a war cost and not be placed on the shippers.

He also does the characteristic stunt of such writers of pointing out only the failures on the other side and the successes on his own side.

Such men as John D. Rockefeller, Walter S. Gifford, Owen D. Young, and many of our railway presidents, and even judges of the United States Supreme Court are to him wolves in sheep's clothing, or even worse. But his argument is not against them as men, but against the system which they uphold and which supports them. He says, in cap-

ital letters, that "Rockefeller is relatively the present owner of American industry."

He also belittles the work of the Rockefeller Medical Foundation in fighting tropical diseases, claiming that it was done in order that the oil resources of the tropics might be exploited. Maybe so, but the remainder of the world has certainly benefitted. If someone had done this work purely on a humanitarian basis it would seem all right but because a capitalist did it for business purposes, it is all wrong. Were it not for the resources of the tropics what would be the use of spending millions to conquer the diseases that are found there?

The book seems unduly long. Many of his ideas are repeated in nearly every chapter. This is for the sake of emphasis but it makes monotonous reading. The material of the majority of the chapters is poorly organized. One seems more to be reading a political speech. In spite of this he has drawn a clear cut contrast and has probably stated the hazy and timid ideas of a large number of people in this country.

CHARLES E. LONDON.

Philosophy and Beauty

Malaisie. By Henri Fauconnier, translated by Eric Sutton. New York: The Macmillan Co. 271 pp. \$2.00.

Malaisie, by Henri Fauconnier, won the Goncourt prize for 1930. The author is a hitherto unknown French writer. He has lived among the scenes of his story, witnessing the strange confusions of races and experiencing the weird life of the tropics. He writes of these strange emotional peoples with an unusual depth of feeling and understanding, interpreting their moods and psychological reactions with sincerity and truth.

Yet the book is not primarily one of social study in the tropics. Indeed it is difficult to place *Malaisie* in any definite category. Its story is interesting with certain

elements of suspense, yet it is a mere skeleton upon which the author has built up a book of nature lore, psychological study, and philosophical comment. There are passages of description that are rare in beauty and emotional appreciation: pictures of phosphorescent seas under a tropic moon, dawn and sunset in the Malay jungle with their symphonies of bird-songs, pictures of native festivals and celebrations.

The greatest enjoyment from the book comes from the philosophical conversations between the two main characters, Rolain and Lascale. These two men, derelicts from the World War, meet again in the rubber plantations of the Malay peninsula. Rolain is the older man, detached from the world and everyday life—a fountain-head of knowledge and advice for the younger Lascale. In their conversations we find old truths expressed in a new and modern manner, and new reactions to life-old problems.

The London Times on the occasion of the award said: "*Malaisie* is a delightful book, an elixir to sip, tasting its rare philosophy and beauty." Much credit should go to the translator, Eric Sutton, who may be remembered for his translation of Arnold Zweig's *The Case of Sergeant Grischa*. The style is clear and limpid. The language is beautiful in its simplicity, and the imagery at times becomes truly poetical.

A. T. WEST.

Emotion Leading to Uncertainty

City Block. By Waldo Frank. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1932. 320 pp. \$2.50.

These fourteen sketches by Mr Waldo Frank, first published in a limited edition in 1922, have not till now been reissued in this country, although they have appeared abroad in both Russian and French in popular editions. It was *City Block* that served definitely to establish Mr Frank as one of the foci of dispute in the cultural and literary world. His previous works of fiction

were *The Unwelcome Man*, 1918, and *The Dark Mother*, 1920. In the same year with *City Block*, he published *Rahab*; in 1923, *Holiday*, and in 1924, *Chalk Face*. Lately, he has written only history and criticism.

The stories that make up *City Block*, according to a brief note by the author, "constitute a single organism . . . and should be read in order." However, it is doubtful that the unsophisticated reader will grasp this principle of unity; for so far as it is present, it lies in a certain identity of mood rather than in any continuity of fact. And this mood of Mr Frank's is neither easy to illustrate nor capable of being defined. Perhaps the simplest and least misleading description of it, is a state of doubt concerning one's relation to the actual world and a yearning for spiritual consolation.

For actual story Mr Frank apparently cares not at all. He is chiefly interested in what people feel in given circumstances. For the most part, we enter one of his stories with premised circumstances (sometimes coarse in the extreme), and become merged in the feelings of the protagonist, with only the most shadowy realization of the world of other people. This is, to a certain point, the method of Signor Luigi Pirandello. But how different the effect of the Italian. In *Si Gira*, for example, the uncertainty of one's identity with the world of fact is adequately, almost tediously, expressed, but in contrast with Mr Frank's shadowy actual world, Signor Pirandello sketches his background almost realistically. Furthermore, the Italian's attitude is neutral if not coldly scientific, while Mr Frank's is warmly emotional.

One feels that Mr Frank would give much to know the answer to the question of spiritual isolation he presents. In other words, one feels that the uncertainty is Mr Frank's, not merely the character's. The doubt naturally arises concerning the qual-

ity of literature that uncertainty can produce. Most of the best literature of the past has been produced by a fairly definite faith in things that are or that may be, though to be sure one gets hints of a spiritual isolation in some of the greatest writers—Shakespeare, for example. And if he had written more subjectively, perhaps there would be more. Doubt, and even negation, have produced fine essays and great lyrics, but in novels and stories, the tradition has been otherwise.

These stories are bound to interest and impress; they will probably leave one feeling a bit thwarted. And the fastidious may be a bit shocked at several of them.

F. K. MITCHELL.

The Art of One Called Master

Horse in the Moon. By Luigi Pirandello. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 238 pp. \$2.50.

Luigi Pirandello, the best known dramatist of modern Italy, has confined himself for so many years to the world of the theatre and to the dramatization of all things in life, that his publishers have thought it necessary to inscribe on the jacket of this—his latest book—the words: "This is a book of fiction." It is true that the great Maestro has, for the moment, abandoned the field in which he has won universal acclaim, and devoted his talents to the creation of a work of fiction—a work that consists of twelve selected short stories from his twenty-four volume project entitled *Stories for the Year Round*. However, though they be fiction in form and composition, their themes might be used for powerful dramas. They are stories developed with all of Pirandello's rich picturesque quality and his unexpected and startling subtleties, bringing out a side of his artistic nature not evident in his dramas and his longer works.

The dramatist gets his laughs out of diablerie and the grotesque. He peers into the souls of his characters and bares them to

the reader, but his sympathy is often cruelly humorous. In one of the three best stories, "A Wee Sma' Drop," the author finds an old man, sitting corpse-like in a wine shop, an untasted bottle before him, passively allowing the flies to attack a pimple on his forehead. We discover that for him the bottom has dropped out of everything, that his disillusionments have culminated in heartbreak. He is unconscious of all but the memory of the happiness that is now fading swiftly. Pirandello tells us this, but he seems to smile inwardly at the poor wretch's misfortune and to harbor a desire to whisper "Excuse me, but wont you at least permit me to brush that fly off your forehead?"

"Horse in the Moon," the sadly beautiful story which serves as the title of the volume, is, perhaps, the best and most impressive of all. Here, the Maestro presents a study of sadness and grotesquerie as the moon comes up, and enters his own poetic gift of expression into the scenes of phantasy, wherein a bridegroom, apoplectic with lust, and the head of a dying horse are silhouetted against a copper moon. "Adriana Takes a Trip" is a study in human tenderness and reveals Pirandello in his best light as a depicter of character. "Sunlight and Shadow" relates the last day of a man who has decided to do away with himself and then wishes he could reconsider. Fragile tenderness fills the brief pages of "The Cat, a Goldfinch, and the Stars," and presents a tiny peep into the warm sentiment that must be lodged in the playwright's heart. He reaches emotional heights that few have surpassed in "The Light Across the Way," and in "Goy" he paints for us a vivid and delicate portrait of ageing love.

The uniqueness and dramatic value of these stories could be attributed only to a master like Pirandello. It is remarkable that his first venture into fiction since 1904 should be so eagerly awaited by the thousands who

know him only as a dramatist, but memories of his novel *The Late Mattia Pascal* bring him to the fore rapidly and insure "Horse in the Moon" of its deserved appeal.

J. B. CLARK.

An Exaggerated Picture

Tobacco Road. By Erskine Caldwell. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1932. 241 pp. \$2.50.

"The story of the disintegration of old man Jeeter and his family, of their dehumanization, is so appalling that the reader is spellbound and has to read on."

Most readers of this novel will not hesitate to subscribe heartily to the dictum above, which come from the dust cover of Mr Caldwell's work, but whether such qualities prove an unqualified recommendation of the book will be left to the taste of the reader.

Tobacco Road is, so far as I know, the first novel that Mr Caldwell has published. Last spring he published a group of short stories entitled *American Earth*. Critics of very diverse schools praised these stories highly; Mr Caldwell was likened to Mark Twain and to Bret Harte, and Mr Munson, in the *New York Sun*, prophesied that Mr Caldwell "might grow up to be America's Fielding."

While *Tobacco Road* exhibits some of the coarser sides of Fielding, it shows hardly any of Fielding's sturdier qualities of humor and satire. If I were pressed to find an eighteenth century parallel, I should select Smollett rather than Fielding, with the reservation that Mr Caldwell falls far short of even a Smollett.

Of course, these comparisons are obviously unfair; it is more profitable to examine the author on his own merit. *Tobacco Road* attempts to present a picture of a family of poor whites whom the world has forgotten. I must confess that I do not recall a starker or more sordid spectacle. The picture presented is so horrible, the characters

so completely depraved and dehumanized, that one for the time overlooks the gross exaggeration and the facile drawing of Mr. Caldwell.

The conception approaches Swift's yahoos, but the purpose of satire, which might have excused the horror of the picture, is lacking. Mr Caldwell's few and scattered remarks on the economic causes of the condition he describes are puerile and inept. It had been better to leave the picture with no explanation at all.

F. K. MITCHELL.

BLACK ROMANCE

(Continued from page 12)

her fancy. Make them neighbors, he would wager, and they'd become lovers of their own accord.

The new scheme greatly delighted its inventor. It removed any question of brutality, and was furthermore a credit to his astuteness.

Mingo was brought from the slave quarters several miles away, and made apprentice to the aged coachman, a man who might any day need a successor. To be elevated from field hand to a position in the master's retinue was marvelous good fortune, but Mingo, though the old man tried to persuade him that he was to be envied, remained, outwardly at least, as contemptuous as ever. Any servitude seemed to go against his nature.

He was quartered in one of the small buildings to the rear of the mansion and fed with all the other domestics from the big kitchen. His duties were negligible.

All the other negroes here eyed him with misgivings. He was to them a strange fellow, to be feared perhaps,

but not to be liked. He was too haughty and unsociable. They had heard accounts of him from the field negroes. Fraternal and well-mannered, they beheld a barbarian in their midst.

Namah eyed him with hostility, but not without curiosity. Vigorous and strong herself, she could not fail to admire the immense vitality of the great strong stranger. Idling or working he never lost the air of power and superiority. The conscious dignity with which he moved, the muscular strength that he sometimes exhibited, the hard pride of his seamed black face, would have impressed a far more world-wise eye than hers. And above all she wondered at his seeming indifference.

Laughlin had seen to it that she was made to carry out his meals, clean and tend his quarters, and do whatever other small tasks that could be counted on to bring them together. All of this was part of his scheme. Patiently he waited for something to happen.

Before many weeks were gone, Mingo walked into his room and found her there tidying things. The sight of the comely brown woman so opportunely at his reach, inside his own walls, awoke a natural impulse. His indifference vanished in an instant. In another moment he had seized her and was caressing the lithe brown body. The girl, her surprise abating, began to struggle, biting and tearing at him with her nails. The tussle netted him a badly scratched face before she freed herself.

The disturbance attracted the at-

tention of the people in the big house. Laughlin came out and with his tongue in his cheek and half an eye turned toward where his lady looked approvingly on, sharply rebuked the amorous coachman.

Namah thereafter looked on him with high and righteous indignation. Mingo, for his part, lapsed into his old attitude of aloofness and disdain. He too was righteously angry, for had not this stupid girl, who should rightfully have been grateful, misused and then betrayed him to their master? A tell-tale woman she was!

When the girl came around with her reproachful mien, he either strode away or turned his back in her face. No suggestion of contrition, Namah discovered, was to be found about him. Vainly she waited for him to make amends; he was adamant.

Either, Laughlin fancied, would have been pleased to resume a friendly attitude, but neither would make the conciliatory move.

In this world-old and still familiar preliminary of amatory negotiation, the man, fortunately for him, held out the longest. Namah, when her ire was completely cooled, still meeting the cold shoulder, was plainly piqued. His attitude of permanent hostility effectively reduced her to the necessity of making the first steps toward pacification.

With smile and gesture, she began to insinuate herself into his favor. Small unrequired services for the man soon became her daily habit. Trifles to decorate his room or to improve his fare became a constant search.

Laughlin watched them one day on a bench by the carriage house, where she had brought his dinner and remained to see him eat it, pointing out the extras she had secured. He munched on, nodding in silence. Seeing him finish, she tried a new plan to catch his interest.

Knowing vastly more of current parlance, she was attempting to teach him, much as her mistress had taught her, her stock of household words. Unfortunately, her first lesson was rather difficult. Pointing to the jewelled band around her little finger, a gift from the mistress, she smilingly exclaimed:

"Ring!"

He nodded.

Then she tried to show him that the act of swinging a bell was "ring." He could not clearly comprehend this and she went on to demonstrate that the simple motion of twisting the water out of a cloth was denoted by the same sound. By now he was entirely confused.

She tried to go over it again. This time he seemed to conceive the idea that she was making sport of him, seeking to embarrass him by her superior erudition. Indignant, he got up and walked off.

Amazed and grieved she saw him move away. That was too much to be borne. Quickly she ran after him, caught his hand and determinedly drew him back.

The kitchen-mammy, shouting for the unwashed dishes, interrupted this parley, but Laughlin Cawdor smiled

a broad smile over what he had seen. His plans were bearing fruit. Sooner than he expected, he was to witness the fulfillment of all his prognostications.

The baby was slightly ailing that night. When his parents retired late to their chamber and took a look into the crib beside their bed, they discovered that the child was in need of attention. There was nothing to do but for someone to summon the nurse to change the nightie and bedclothes.

When the husband opened a rear door of the mansion to call the nurse,

he noticed the flicker of a hearthfire through the window of her room. Standing a minute, he fancied that sounds reached him through the still air. He decided to make the few steps that would lead to her door.

Through the cracked threshold he saw on the floor in front of the fire what brought a grin of delight to his face. He paused for a moment to make sure it was Mingo; he softly retraced his steps. Upstairs again he explained to his lady that the nurse was entertaining and that it might be best for them to look after the child.

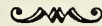


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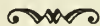
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CONTENTS

Frontispiece: General John Steele	PAGE 4
<p>General Steele, author of the hitherto unpublished letter, herein printed, was Comptroller of the Treasury during President Washington's administration. He was an eye witness, with George and Martha Washington, of the balloon ascension. The frontispiece was reproduced from a miniature made by James Peale in 1797.</p>	
Washington and Aeronautics (<i>historical narrative</i>)	Archibald Henderson 5
<p>Dr. Henderson is head of the department of mathematics at the University of North Carolina. He is perhaps the only living literary figure who has attained international reputation in mathematics. His literary work has been mostly historical and biographical. A collection of his biographical sketches, <i>Contemporary Immortals</i>, was published a year ago. However, he is most widely known for his eminently fine biography of George Bernard Shaw.</p>	
Elphenor (<i>verse</i>)	May Folwell Hoisington 12
<p>Mrs. Hoisington, who is chairman of the poetry division of the National League of American Pen Women, is widely known for her translations of French verse. She has appeared frequently in the ARCHIVE for several years.</p>	
Editorial	Ovid Williams Pierce, Jr. 13
Eat Thereof (<i>fiction</i>)	David Cornel DeJong 16
<p>Mr. DeJong, a member of the English graduate school of Duke University, has had many of his works published in nationally known publications. One of his short stories recently appeared in <i>Scribner's</i>.</p>	

What Place Has the College Newspaper? (*essay*) E. G. Thomas 21

Mr. Thomas has served as editor of the *Chronicle*, weekly newspaper of Duke University. He is retiring president of the North Carolina Collegiate Press Association. This is his first appearance in the ARCHIVE.

Book Reviews

Marietta MARIE UPDIKE WHITE 25

Mrs. White is a member of the English department of the woman's college of Duke University. She has previously contributed to the ARCHIVE.

The Song of the Lark Ovid Williams Pierce, Jr. 25

Bright Skin J. B. Clark 26

Mr. Clark has been elected editor of the ARCHIVE for the year 1932-33.

Soviet River Louis J. Clark 27

The Yoke of Thunder Marshall Pritchett 28

Mr. Pritchett is associate editor of the ARCHIVE.



GENERAL JOHN STEELE
Comptroller of the Treasury

After the miniature made by
James Peale in 1797

The ARCHIVE

May, 1932

Vol. XLIV

No. 8

Washington and Aeronautics—The First Balloon Ascension In America

By ARCHIBALD HENDERSON

JUST a century and a half ago, lacking one year, a human being first ascended into the air in a balloon. This was Jean François Pilâtre de Rozier, who made his first ascent at Paris on October 15, 1783. The balloon itself was invented by two Frenchmen, Joseph Michel and Etienne Montgolfier in 1782, the first flight (without a passenger) taking place on June 5, 1783. The French have always taken a foremost place in the conquest of the air, in both aeronautics and aviation. Just as in our own time the first flight across the English Channel in an airplane was made by a Frenchman, Blériot, so in the eighteenth century the first flight across the Channel was made by a Frenchman, Jean Pierre Blanchard. It does not appear to be generally known that a co-worker and fellow-passenger with Blanchard in this first

flight across the Channel, on January 7, 1785, was an American, a physician, Dr. J. Jefferies. This daring American scientist inaugurated America's stirring history in the progress of human flight, associated with the names of Langley, the Wright brothers, Lindberg, Byrd, Chamberlain, and many others. It is worthy of note that Dr. Jefferies in 1784 made an ascent from London for scientific purposes, in which he carried out barometric, thermometric and hygrometric observations, and collected samples of the air at different heights.

George Washington was an engineer of eminence, a patron of science, who looked forward to great scientific developments in the future. When the news of the balloon ascensions already mentioned reached Washington, through the medium of the press,

he prophetically suggested, in semi-jocular vein, the most recent modern development of aerostation (April 4, 1784): "I have only newspaper accounts of air balloons, to which I do not know what credence to give; as the tales related of them are marvellous and lead us to expect that our friends at Paris in a little time will come flying through the air, instead of ploughing the ocean to get to America."

At the beginning of the year, 1793, the scene was set for the first balloon ascension in America. The aeronaut was no other than Blanchard himself, who with Jefferies had first crossed the English Channel in a balloon in 1785. Almost exactly to the day, eight years later, Blanchard made his arrangements for a flight at Philadelphia, then the national capital. For weeks in advance, the city was placarded with handbills announcing his coming flight; and many articles and verses regarding him and aeronautics appeared in the Philadelphia newspapers. On the very day of the flight, January 9, 1793, the following notice, inserted by Blanchard and illustrated with a cut of his balloon, and the legend: *Sic itur ad astra* appeared in *The Philadelphia Gazette*:

Mr. Blanchard's
forty-fifth aerial flight

— — —

Mr. Blanchard, adopted citizen of the principal cities of Europe, pensioner of the French nation, member and correspondent of sev-

eral academies and literary societies.

This Day, January 9,
At ten o'clock precisely in the morning, will rise from the centre of the Prison Court, over the city of Philadelphia.

Subscribers are informed that the doors will be open at 7 o'clock precisely.

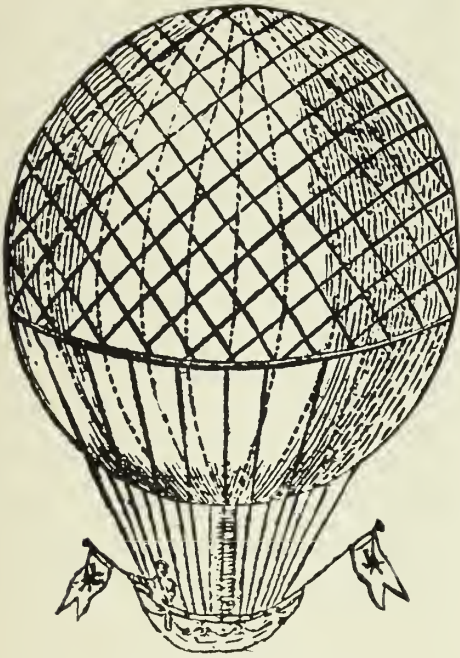
Persons arriving from the country to witness the experiment may procure tickets of admission by applying at Oeller's Hotel until the *Eighth*, at nine in the evening.

First seats 5 dollars—second seats 2.

If the weather should prove too unfavorable for the experiment, it will be announced by bills put up at an early hour in the morning.

Blanchard took the precaution to secure in advance Washington's permission to make the ascension. Blanchard's own account, a very rare pamphlet, was published in Philadelphia the very year of the flight. It is entitled "Journal of my Forty-Fifth Ascension, being the First Performed in America. On the Ninth of January, 1793." It bears the following dedication on the title-page: "Inscribed to George Washington, President of the United States of America, The Patron of Liberty, the Laws and the Fine Arts, by his Most Humble, and Most Obedient Servant, Blanchard." In this Journal, Blanchard says: "I made it my duty, nay I was proud of attempting in this metropolis my first aerial ascension in America, and I

Sic itur ad astra.



Mr. BLANCHARD's
FORTY-FIFTH AERIAL FLIGHT.

MR. BLANCHARD, adopted citizen of the principal cities of Europe, pensioner of the French nation, member and correspondent of several academies and literary societies,

THIS DAY, January 9.

At 10 o'clock precisely in the morning, Will rise from the centre of the PRISON COURT, over the city of Philadelphia.

Subscribers are informed that the doors will be open at 6 o'clock precisely.

Persons arriving from the country to witness the experiment may procure tickets of admission by applying at Oel's hotel until the EIGHTH, at nine in the evening.—It seats 5 dollars—second seats 2.

If the weather should prove too unfavorable for the experiment, it will be announced by bills put up at an early hour the morning.

derived from it the most sanguine expectations of a complete success. The gracious reception with which I was welcomed by the hero of liberty, General George Washington, President of the United States . . . , the eagerness

which I thought I discovered in the public to see Montgolfier's sublime discovery reduced to practice, every thing seemed to tell me that I might with confidence display the mechanism of an aerostat, to make it soar above the clouds, and convince the New World that man's ingenuity is not confined to earth alone, but opens to him new and certain roads in the vast expanse of heaven." Washington promised Blanchard that he and Mrs. Washington would attend the ascension; and that he would then and there hand to Blanchard an official permit to make the aerial voyage.

The morning of Wednesday, January 9, opened with the sky cloudy and overcast. From six o'clock on cannon boomed at regular intervals to announce the flight. An immense concourse of people gathered to witness the flight; but, probably because of the high charges for admittance, only a small crowd gathered within the prison yard. The weather cleared about nine o'clock, at which time the inflation of the balloon began. While the balloon was inflating a band of music played various airs; and the slow movement of the music when the flight began at ten minutes past ten o'clock added solemnity to the occasion. The balloon almost spherical in shape, and twenty-seven feet in diameter, was of a yellowish colored silk highly varnished and covered with a strong network. The car was painted blue and spangled with stars.

President and Mrs. Washington, M. Ternant, the Minister Plenipoten-

tiary of France to the United States, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, and other members of the Cabinet were present. Blanchard, dressed in a plain blue suit, and wearing a cocked hat decorated with a white plume, was the cynosure of all eyes. After affixing to the aerostat the car, laden with ballast, meteorological instruments, and some refreshments thoughtfully provided by friends, Blanchard, at nine minutes past ten, hastened to take leave of the President and the French Minister. Washington personally handed to Blanchard the document which the aeronaut described as the "passport"; and Blanchard comments with Gallic elation upon the incident: "I never felt the value of glory so much as I did in that moment, in the presence of a Hero, whom she had constantly attended at the head of armies, and with whom she still presided over the councils of his country."

The "passport" or official authorization, which is indeed a notable historical document, reads as follows:

George Washington, President of the United States of America

To all to whom these presents shall come.

The bearer hereof, Mr. Blanchard a citizen of France proposing to ascend in a balloon from the city of Philadelphia, at 10 o'clock A.M. this day, to pass in such direction and to descend in such place as circumstances may render most convenient. These are therefore to recommend to all citizens of the United States, and others, that in

his passage, descent, return or journeying elsewhere, they oppose no hindrance or molestation to the said Mr. Blanchard; and, that on the contrary, they receive and aid him with that humanity and good will, which may render honor to their country, and justice to an individual so distinguished by efforts to establish and advance an art, in order to make it useful to mankind in general.

Given under my hand and seal at the city of Philadelphia, this ninth day of January, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three, and of the independence of America the seventeenth.

(Seal) Signed

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

In the Philadelphia newspapers of January 9, 1793, appeared a poem in the French language, addressed to Blanchard. I am indebted to my wife, the poet, Barbara Henderson, for the following translation:

Great Blanchard, while the heavens
you traverse

Shout to the planets of the universe
That France has vanquished inward
enmity

Its outer foes repulsed by gallantry;
Enter Olympus, tell the gods, I
pray,

That Frenchmen are victorious to-
day!

Then pray to Mars the arms of
France shall sever

The hopes of every tyranny, for-
ever!

A description of Blanchard's flight by one of the spectators might well

have an abiding historical interest for future generations. Indefatigable researches among the papers of Washington, Jefferson, Hamilton and other members of the cabinet reveal no contemporary letter describing the flight nor even so much as a single reference to it. Among the spectators was my great-great-grandfather, General John Steele, Comptroller of the United States Treasury and the right-hand man of Alexander Hamilton, the Secretary of the Treasury. Research among the large number of unpublished letters of Steele in my possession has brought to light, to my keen gratification, a letter describing Blanchard's ascension, written on the very day of the flight. It was written by General Steele to his wife, Mary Nesfield Steele, at Salisbury, North Carolina, where I was born. I give below the letter in full. The portion of it, describing Blanchard's flight, is reproduced in facsimile as an illustration accompanying this article.

Philad^a, Jan^y. 9th, 1793.

My dear Mary,

It is so long since I have rec^d. a letter from you that I am really affraid you have forgotten the man who loves you more than all the world besides. Except the first fortnight, I have written you every post, you have not done the same, the reason I cannot tell.

Lately, I have enjoyed very good health, this I trust will give you that degree of pleasure which it ought. To receive a letter from you containing the same information in regard to your health would afford

me more pleasure than I can express.

I had last night, and for several nights very disagreeable dreams, and though I am too much of a Philosopher to believe them yet they always make me unhappy. At the present moment I am particularly so because I have not heard from you (in) so long. I feel very anxious about my private affairs, but much more so about you and my dear little children. You and them compose my only hopes for happiness in this world, and the peculiar situation in which I left you increases my solicitude.

Today a balloon about the size of a small hay stack went up with a man in it, for several miles in the air. Many thousands of people were affected to see this interesting sight. At seeing the man waving a flag at an immense height from the ground, was the most interesting sight that ever I beheld, and tho I had no acquaintance with him, I could not help trembling for his safety. As he was going up he took off his hat, and bowed to the bystanders, when about half a mile high, and from that to a mile high, he waved his flag beautifully, and continued to do so until he was quite out of sight. The balloon from the size above mentioned, diminished in appearance as it went up until it came to about the size of a sugar loaf, and there it appear'd to stand near an hour, and finally went off, nobody knows where. But we shall hear tomorrow.

My love to the children and Mrs. McCorkle's family and to Mr. Chambers and his family, and accept the unfeigned love, yourself, of one who loves you with affection and sincerity.

Yours, and yours only,
JN^o. STEELE.

Mrs. Steele.

At the boom of the last cannon, Blanchard gave the signal of release and threw out some ballast. The balloon rose vertically with a very gentle motion; and Blanchard waved his hat and flourished a flag bearing on one side the colors of the United States, on the other the colors of France. The balloon soon rose to a great height and shaped its course toward the South and East. A number of young gentlemen of Philadelphia mounted their horses and galloped in the direction of the balloon's course; but they were soon hopelessly outdistanced by the balloon which was travelling, as some local journalist said, at the "amazing speed of 20 miles an hour." After a flight of forty-six minutes, during which it traversed horizontally a space of more than fifteen miles, the balloon descended to the ground, a little to the east of Woodberry in the State of New Jersey, at 10:56 A.M. Blanchard was soon surrounded by a group of the curious; and being unable to speak the English language, he produced Washington's "passport" with magic results. Blanchard himself records: "In the midst of a profound silence was it read with a loud and audible voice. How dear the name

of Washington is to this people! With what eagerness they gave me all possible assistance, in consequence of his recommendation!"

Blanchard had a certificate drawn up and signed by the people who gathered about the balloon on its descent. This certificate, published in *The Pennsylvania Journal*, January 16, 1793, reads as follows:

These may certify, that we the subscribers saw the bearer, Mr. Blanchard, settle in his balloon, in Deptford township, county of Gloucester, in the State of New Jersey, about 15 miles from Philadelphia. Witness our hands the 9th day of Jan., Anno, Domini, 1793—at 56 minutes after 10 o'clock.

Everard Bolton
Joseph Griffith
I. H. Cheeseman
Amos Cattell
Zera North
Samuel Carpenter
Samuel Taggard

The balloon was transported back to Philadelphia in a wagon. Blanchard returned to Philadelphia, *via* Cooper's Ferry, in a carriage, being accompanied by Messrs. Jonathan and Thomas Penrose and other gentlemen. Half an hour after his arrival in Philadelphia at six o'clock, Blanchard paid his respects to President Washington, whom he informed of the "happy effects" produced by the "passport." He also presented the colors to Washington, who graciously accepted them, with the expressed hope that Blanchard would continue to advance

To day a balloon about the size of a small hay stack went up with a man in it, for some miles in the air. Many thousands of people were collected to see this interesting sight.

At seeing the man waving a flag at an immense height from the ground, was the most interesting sight that ever I beheld, and tho' I had no acquaintance with him, I could not help trembling for his safety. As he was going up, he took off his hat, and bowed to the bystanders, when about half a mile high, and from that to a mile high, he waved his flag beautifully, and continued to do so untill he was quite out of sight. The balloon from the size above mentioned, diminished in appearance as it went up untill it came to about the size of a sugar loaf, and then it appeared to stand over an hour, and finally went off, nobody knows where. But we shall hear tomorrow.

My love to the children, & Mr. McCorkles family to Mr. Chambers & his family, and accept the unfeigned love yourself, of one who loves you with affection & sincerity —

Yours, and Your Only
Jⁿ Steele

Facsimile of letter written by General John Steele to his wife
Phila., Jan^y. 9th, 1793

the new science, for the welfare of mankind. This entire episode is a remarkable illustration of Washington's vision, his unvarying purpose to enhance the knowledge and happiness of the American people.

Elphenor

From the French of JEAN GIRAUDOUX

By MAY FOLWELL HOISINGTON

From the Abbey beyond
Bellac I gaze on
To the Mall and that pond
(Which is gone!)

And I see as of old
Autumn stroll through the corn
While he blows on his gold
Noiseless horn.

And I see warmly dressed
Aunt Solange in the heat. . . .
She is hating her guest,
Who won't eat!

All my youth (the most part,
God knows, very drear)
From my dried-up old heart
Drags this tear.

EDITORIAL

Do College Students Believe in God?

This question must be answered in the same manner in which all questions about student beliefs are answered. Most college students have not thought enough to believe or disbelieve.

In an attempt to determine the intellectual status of the average student we are deterred by the obvious foils that faithfully shield the elusive "typical". No two persons will agree upon any one thing or any one man as typical; for a person who has been a type to one man will probably have shown to another the individual and peculiar nature of his character. Aware of the very indefinite implication of the term average and of the impossibility of ascertaining who the average is, our references to the average will mean the student who is dogmatic neither in his belief nor his disbelief. The students of this class we judge to be in the majority, to compose perhaps sixty per cent of the whole. The remaining forty per cent, we believe, do profess dogmatic convictions. But these approximations as given must be held as approximations.

This article is written objectively; it is in no way an attempt to defend the religious views of any one class of students, rather it is an effort to examine the religious mind of present-

day students and, in a measure, to account for their respective views.

The average college student has normal interests. His concern is for the maintenance of a satisfactory scholastic record, the acquisition of a superficial knowledge of worldly matters, and a maximum degree of social diversion. Youth, innately, does not need orthodox religion. The search for a philosophy of life retards and disflavors the enjoyment of life. Spiritual conception, students feel, is something that can be put off, that can be acquired when convenient. Religion belongs to that vague, far-off realm of concepts that seem somehow to come down closer to man when he has been emotionally stirred by death, or disappointment, or achievement. Religion has its place in the dramas, the crises, of life, not in the set and normal situations. Religious beliefs are wanting because substitutes have supplanted them. These substitutes are warmer, more human, more comforting; they more easily explain life, admit of the freedom and spontaneity of youth. What normal college student today is not unpleasantly chilled by the cold Biblical ethics that ask more of a man than he can answer? They seem to him to lack vitality, to lack human application, at least for the present day. Rather they should be:

read in a dimly lit Sunday School room on Wednesday night before a handful of old men and women who soon have the final gods of their fates to reckon with. This is not to mean that the college student is without sentiment, for his substitutes for spiritual realization have served him well. He believes that it is better to be frank than to be a hypocrite, that it is better to grow than to think. He knows that conventions and social dictates are changing; and it is with a spirit of adventure that he goes out to embrace these changes. His enthusiasm, his ambition, his concern for full life are his substitutes. From them comes his confidence that other things will right themselves; and other things, for youth, are extraneous.

These persons of this greater class are certainly not religious, their concern, spasmodically, being merely perfunctory. But were they asked the question each of them would answer forth emphatically that he did believe in God, though he did have some doubts about parts of the Bible. For the most part the views of this class are worthless; they are not legitimate opinions. They are founded neither on conviction, nor thought, nor study. Rather they are the shiftless, spineless attitudes that are easiest to carry and easiest to pass on. Their service is in filling a temporary need.

It is the religious views of the smaller class which are important. They alone are significant in the trend of collegiate thought. Specifically we are concerned with those students who by reason of temperament or circum-

stance are given to more serious questioning.

Outside of college circles one does hear references to the student who has put great notions in his head, who has forgotten what he was taught at home. Undoubtedly, they say, it is because of association with those professors and scientists who have ruled God out of their systems of life and who think that they are very learned for their denial of a Supreme Being. It is true that outsiders are confident that it is the college professor who is responsible for the cooling zeal of young people for their Church and their God. Apparently no sincerity of thought is allowed the student who dares to express his doubts and cynicisms. That student is warned that he will soon forget his foolish ideas when he is actually faced with the problem of making a living in the world. As a matter of fact the outsiders are perhaps right. The chances are that he will forget them.

What brings about the lapse of a student's orthodox faith? We believe that it is begun by his study of the Bible for the first time in an exhaustive and systematic manner. Knowledge of which is thrown for the first time against his scanty conceptions of the principles of the sciences, with particular reference to the science of animal life: the evolution of life from primordial matter and the principles of natural selection and heredity. The student perceives grave incompatibilities between the theories of the sciences and the story of the human descent from Adam. The use

of such argument is of course typically sophomoric; but it is significant in the student's thought in that it leads to closer study and slower deliberation. A whole new world of thought and philosophy is gradually opened. A new set of values is thrashed painfully into permanent possession. From the wide and promiscuous reading into which his natural interests lead him he finds the statement that most all great thinkers at one time repudiated their childhood gods. Then he is told that he must follow the course of his reason wherever it might carry him and that he must not be afraid of his thought. The newspapers carried ridicule for, and misunderstanding of, the unfortunate Dayton, Tennessee, trial; also the Arkansas state legislature was scoffed at for its law forbidding the teaching of evolution in state schools. Surely here, the student feels, is a new era in which sentiment, prejudice, and ignorance will be thrown into the trash pile of antiquated notions.

With the break of his religious illusion accompanying questionings about every aspect of modern life fall upon him. American republicanism, he reads, as a system of government, is not infallible. Fraud, politics, financial power have their part here too. Democracy, after all, must not be the perfection of government. With his characteristically vigorous mind these things he ponders eagerly. What is the system of government in Russia, he asks. Perhaps that is sound. Has it not solved the question of labor and capital? Is not that what is needed in

America? And then from the psychologists he learns of the strange laws of the mechanists—laws which determine mechanically the character of all life and conduct. And from the astronomers he learns of the system of worlds in the great cosmos and of the almost infinitesimal insignificance of the earth in the whole. This scanty survey of the development of thought, which the student gets, naturally leads to perplexity and confusion. This state of perplexity is disheartening and tiring. The broader knowledge is an extra burden. It would be very hard to return to a settled community, to normal families where men are working and dying and being born. There men are too irrevocably opinionated; there the first demand is conformity. Perhaps this is the reason that so few have the intellectual integrity to follow through their questionings. Though each sets forth his philosophy and his belief about human purpose, few speak with the assurity of inward conviction. Indeed it is not to be expected that a college student should manifest that outlook which represents the harmony of mature philosophical thought and actual life experience which men of age and observation do know.

But today it is evident that a much greater number of students than ever before have embraced those principles which tolerance, freedom, reason, and scientific research have thus far proved to be sound, and that a convinced but smaller group are not reluctant to deny the Gods of their fathers.

Eat Thereof

By DAVID CORNEL DEJONG

IT HAD rained. The elms shook down large drops of water which tumbled down on the wet sidewalk whenever the cold, staggering wind turned around the houses. Lank, grey-yellow leaves sidled downward and flattened in the grass or in the puddles. Whenever the wind was still, the Salvation Army drum thudded upon the chilled darkness. And through it all leaves fell.

She did not want to hear that drum. And to a man, who edged too close up to her, she said, "Careful there," without turning, but with sufficient inflection in her voice to ward off his further approaches. She pushed her hands deeply into her coat pockets and walked on. A large drop of water flattened upon her chin. She tasted it gingerly with her tongue, and huddled her head between her shoulders. Where lighted windows cast broad bars of orange over the walk, she ran a little faster, but she did not know why. A little fox terrier came, sniffed at her heels, and then ambled on ahead of her, just a few steps. Water dribbled dismally from his drooping tail, and beneath a street light she saw that he shivered perceptibly. "Go home dog," she muttered, "this isn't weather for a self-respecting person." The dog scurried a little faster, stopped, and then pattered on behind her with

little, dribbling footfalls. She said no more, but walked and walked, desperately, intent only on her walking. Three streets ahead, store windows yellowed the air, and larger sounds arose. Three more blocks. She shivered. Two children passed her and were silent. When they were nearly out of hearing they laughed timidly. The bakery belched clouds of black smoke. She ducked her head as far as she could in her coat collar. The dog stopped to sniff at a dark object and soon she was far ahead of him.

There was music, swift, nervous leaps of dance music stirred, and toward the music she went. "That is it," she said half aloud. The music was very light now, and she saw dancing figures move past the translucent windows on the second floor. No longer hesitating, she walked on past the brightly lit front. Carefully she scanned the long row of cars, and suddenly she walked faster. "And that's it," she said once again.

She stopped by a gleaming, new automobile. Bill never locked the doors; it was one of his boasts that he didn't. Very briefly she poised one foot on the running board and looked around. Then she opened the back door. The terrier came and sniffed at her heels. "Get the . . ." She kicked at the beast. He yelped a little, half-

heartedly, tripped away in a curious half-arch, and stopped to look at her. "Get the, you . . ." she growled. The terrier backed up two paces and hesitated again. She seated herself and slammed the door shut. Very deeply she huddled into the seat. The dog ambled to a tree.

She felt without emotion, woodlike and very still. There was nothing to do now but wait. She felt the wetness of her hair, tried to rearrange it, but dropped her hands helplessly next to her. Her feet were wet and cold, and she knew that her stockings were spattered up to the knees. Large drops tumbled from trees and thumped unevenly down upon the car. She listened to them, and tried to think what they sounded like. They were somewhat like long, indecisive knocks from someone timid and fearful. Again she felt her hair. It was true then. And all it brought to her now was an odd composure, to which there could be applied neither thought nor reason. Here was the proof, but what of it? Long ago she had heard that Bill went out with other women, and weeks ago she had started to believe it. What did it matter now? Tonight she had decided to act, and now she did not dare to think for fear that she might change her plans. She should go on now, but also, she should not think. Suddenly she lowered the window and whistled for the terrier. He turned. He listened and waited, nearly half a block away, but did not come. She whistled again. "Is that your dog lady?"

She looked at the boy who had

spoken to her. He was about sixteen, obviously looking for adventure. She looked at him long, without speaking. Then she said, "I should say not," and stared at him haughtily, trying to embarrass him, but feeling more miserable. He smiled a little and said "Oh," and did not know what to do next. She kept on staring at him, and he straightened. "My mistake," he muttered gallantly and stepped back. She said, "All right," and shut the window. "Lady. Your dog lady," she laughed. God knows she could not look like a girl any more. They felt already safe to call her lady. She laughed till all laughter seemed squeezed out of her. Then she felt her stockings again. She laughed once more, because she wanted to laugh. After that laugh she pleated her mouth rigidly. She must go through with it. When Bill came with that woman, she would be in the back of the car and surprise them. Things would come to a head then, had to come to a head, no matter how. She shut her eyes. The raindrops drummed on, and boys ran splashingly past. She held her eyes shut tightly and pressed her hands flatly on the seat. Drops of water trickled from her hair and eddied down her temples, over her cheeks and then downward. She let them go. The music started up again.

A little later she rose and climbed into the driver's seat. She stood up, with her face close to the mirror and waited for cars to pass, that she might look at herself by the headlights. Cars came, many, and each time she looked at her thin, shining face in the mirror

and waited for the next car. "I am homely," she said. Another car flashed light on her face, and she repeated, "I am." And she looked again. Nine cars had passed; she would wait for six more. She was going to hurt herself, she would keep on looking at her miserable self. Perhaps that would arouse her, make her furious, so that she would have to act. She was four years older than he, and it was she who had urged the marriage. She recited these things to herself. But she forgot to count the cars, and slumped back into the seat and rubbed her chin on the steering wheel till it hurt. Then she crawled to the back of the car again and waited. He had accepted marriage because she had been willing to work, and he would not have to work much after that. The music went on. She turned and watched the dance hall entrance, and each time the window steamed over, she rubbed it clean with her coat sleeve. It rained again.

She waited long. She grew stiff and tired. Once, far off, she saw the terrier again. The rain rattled on the top now, and no-one passed any longer. Gleaming puddles stirred with haloes, reflected yellow lights and then quivered them to shards. Only a cat passed, twice, close against the wall of a store. Nothing else. The music quavered up again, stirred to shrill frenzy and died languorously out. But it started up again. She thought no more, she only waited. It could not last much longer. And suddenly the rain stopped. She watched the last loose drops. The trees rained on, hap-

hazardly. The music wailed out, clattered to a loud shriek and stopped. She watched the entrance. That had been the end. People came out and stood on the edge of the sidewalk. They reached out hands to feel if it rained, and went on.

She stiffened and watched. That was Bill, huge and straight in his long blue coat, and with him she was. She was slender and pretty, and she was laughing. She looked fixedly. Her jaws were sore and her throat was hard and rigid. They waited. Bill also extended his hand to feel rain. Then they turned their backs and waited, and she saw Harry English, and with him also a girl. And Louise was at home with the children. Louise had children. She sat straight and stared.

Suddenly she was aware of their approaching. She could not remain. She had not figured with four, and she could not sit there, with Harry coming along. She jumped up, opened the door on the street side and stepped out. She ran blindly through the headlights of a coming car. A horn warned bluntly. She nearly stumbled. But she had reached the other side, and now she kept on running, frantically. "She was damned pretty," she spoke to herself as she ran. "Damn pretty." She ran three blocks, and then she stopped and leaned against the wall of a garage. She did not look back. Her heart thudded and her ribs ached. That was all. That could ever be all.

Slowly she rose and turned the corner to walk homeward. Perhaps it

was better so, she thought grimly. Everything had assumed the vastness of a huge, senseless blank, into which she moved with difficulty. She welcomed the splashing of large drops against her face. She shunned the puddles no longer, but waded fiercely through them. It started to rain again. "Thank God," she said, and kicked a leafless twig out of her path.

She heard the moist, little pattering footsteps behind her again. She turned around and saw the little terrier again. The dog stopped and she stopped also. She hunched down and called to him, "Come here, come here doggie." Slowly he came, hesitatingly. When she laid her hand on his wet neck, he wagged a moist tail loosely, and sought her other hand with a warm, red tongue. He stood up on his hind legs and put his front paws on her knees. She lowered her head and laid it against his wet neck, and he licked her chin with his long, moist tongue. She rose, and said almost harshly, "Come." She started to walk again, hurriedly, and the terrier followed. Two or three times in each block she repeated, "Come," and he would patter a little faster for a few steps. She also walked faster and faster.

The house was dark. She entered by the back door, but the terrier hesitated. She held the door wide open for him, and again she commanded, "Come." He came and walked closely beside her. She turned the lights on and slumped into a kitchen chair, while he waited, wagging his tail meekly. She stared at him, long, and

sometimes his tail wagged very slowly, and sometimes fast, and sometimes it dropped uncertainly. She rose and went to the icebox, got some milk and poured it into a pie tin. Then she got some bread from the pantry. Slowly she broke it, and he waited expectantly. She looked down on him and then she said slowly as she broke more bread. "This is my body that is broken for you." She did not laugh. Once she had been religious. She stooped to give him the plate, and she added, "Eat thereof." He ate greedily, and wagged his tail continuously. They would eat of her. She was to be eaten, no more. She looked down upon his narrow, wet back and laughed. "You're also a he," she said. She laughed again and again, and pressed her hands against her sides because she was full of pain. When he was through, she brought him down cellar, and spread out an old coat for him on the cellar floor.

Slowly she mounted the stairs then, turned off the lights and went into the bedroom and undressed. She lay in bed, very straight, very rigid, as a dead body. She was too cold to shiver, and she did not think. She waited long, sleeplessly. Her hair was wet upon the pillow, and her feet were like stone pillars. She waited and listened. At last the car came into the driveway. She turned on her side and shut her eyes. Closely she listened to all the sounds he made, and finally she heard the creaking of the stairway, the shrill whine of the fourth step, and the grunt of the last one. She acted as if she slept, but he did not turn on the

light, and undressed in the dark. She listened to his undressing, and smelled the damp odor from his clothes and the tobacco. Finally he was ready, paused before the bed to peer at her and then he crawled in, next to her. She did not move. His warm foot touched hers, and hastily he drew his foot away. She waited again, with her eyes wide open in the darkness. The house creaked softly and rain trickled down the window panes. She was very cold.

Soon he slept. She turned her face toward him, but carefully she moved her cold feet far out, so that she would not touch him. Slowly she pushed her face toward him, until she reached his

shoulder. She laid her cheek against it. He did not move. Hot tears burned down her cheeks and soaked through his pajamas. His even breathing went on. She lay on her fingers till they were warm, and then she stroked his cheek and felt the short, hard bristles on his upper lip. The rain droned monotonously.

Then she sat up straight in the darkness. "Go on," she said into the dark room, "Eat of me. That's all." It was not her voice, but something hard and strained and emotionless. He did not stir but breathed on. "Go on," she whispered. Suddenly she slid back under the covers and lay rigid, counting his breathing.



What Place Has the College Newspaper?

By E. G. THOMAS

MUCH editorial agitation has been created in various parts of the country during the scholastic year concerning vociferous expression on the parts of college editors, all of which has brought to the fore questions and answers as to the province of a collegiate editor and of a scholastic newspaper.

In college news sheets of years ago, the average college editor accepted a place of complacency and satisfaction in the presentation of happenings about his campus. His paper was one which bore no hint of sensationalism; his editorials were usually the agree-with-all and satisfied-with-all type; and his thought and comment portrayed an intense conservatism. But the days of the humble college sachen seem to have passed. He has become obsessed with the crusading spirit. His news columns contain more vigorous picturization of events; his editorial comment more readily trends into channels of constructive criticism of conditions; and his thought goes deeper into editorial subjects which he selects.

During college days, while one's mind is in its most formative period, since the college editor represents in

either a small or great way the voice of expression upon the campus, it is natural that variety of thought will enter his mind. It logically follows that during a time when a person is being trained to think for himself he should not be stifled into repressing his thoughts within his own soul.

In a discussion of the college newspaper's province the question arises whether the college journal shall have the same right of freedom of the press as the professional journals. If absolute and unrestricted freedom of speech is to accrue to worldly newspapers,—which there seems to be reason to doubt—should not college newspapering be granted the same rights? The most outstanding example of restriction of a college editor's field is the recent situation which resulted at Columbia university when the editor of *The Spectator* dared express openly his opinions upon two or three different situations at the school and was dismissed for attempting to be a crusader. Omitting true circumstances which might or might not have made such action necessary, mainly because the true status of the action of his dismissal does not seem to be known gen-

erally, the freedom of speech of the collegiate editor was challenged.

There is a type of college newspaper head who is sometimes more hastily critical than correct. Even when stabbing at the right persons he becomes so overcome with a surging spirit that he forgets to sharpen the knife of his attack with justification. Inexperience and the impatience of youth, together with a desire for recognition, are often the prompters. Nevertheless, an institution which attempts to curb freedom of expression admits weakness when it disallows criticism. The truly great college is strong enough to withstand criticism launched against it. All in all, the constructive college paper should not be squelched if democracy is to be an inalienable right of collegians as well as of adults. The college student who is being trained in the principles of a democratic government finds it difficult to see justification when he must withhold his feelings simply because they are not always in agreement.

The calibre of college newspapers is improving—and it seems to be an undeniable fact that they are—because college editors, or the general run of them, are thinking more. The representatives of the college press are thinking more deeply because their constituencies are thinking in deeper terms. We are in disagreement with some prominent educators and other well-known men who deride the American college student for his alleged lack of interest in problems confronting men of our times. Perhaps we do not have the auspicious out-

bursts of oratory and rebellion that have been known to occur in college communities of older countries, but “Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage.” Just because students of our country do not stir up revolutions is not sufficient reason for statements that they are not thinking in terms of their lives in politics, government, and sociable civilization after they embark upon the voyage of public life. The greatest thinkers the world has ever known have frequently restrained their thoughts to themselves until the time became proper for them to act. The business world seems to be made up of two different kinds of men, as far as a belief and faith in college students is concerned. There is that group which takes into its organizations college graduates, recognizing their youthful vigor and conscientiousness of purpose; then there is that type of mind which brands the rigorous, pensive, and bold collegian as an immature person who oversteps his bounds when he disagrees upon some weighty question. They would make of the young man a strict conformist to convention and discourage any hint of radicalism of ideas.

An obsession of futility has hindered college newspapering in the past from achieving what it might have accomplished. If he does commit a *faux pas* occasionally, the editor becomes the victim of a feeling of futility for his efforts. The fact is impressed upon his mind that a reformer is disliked, and his friendships change with the wind. He expects some of his ob-

jectives to be misinterpreted and that few will care about or very long remember his endeavors. He knows that his thought is frequently ignored and recognized as being immature. Before collegiate journalism can be as potent as it has capabilities of being, college editors must shake off some of the feeling of futility. They must replace these shackles with more confidence, taking for granted the fact that their thought is unprejudiced, fair, and justified.

Student bodies are to blame for much of this futile feeling on the parts of the pressmen. The editor is right when he feels within his own soul that his laborious hours are unappreciated by the average collegian. It would be interesting to know what percentage of students really read the editorials or the editorial page. A very small figure, we should say. A joy to the heart of most any college editor would be a student body which delved deeply enough into the efforts of the paper or was enough interested in them to send in frequent commenting letters indicating student reaction—a thing practically unknown to most collegiate sachems.

Collegiate newspapering naturally sets up for itself some limitations. It can not be wholly a means of publicity for its school, neither can it serve as a professional press, nor as a journal of history. A problem of editors is in the deviation from these three services and yet the combining of them so as to issue the most serviceable product. When an editor makes of his columns a publicity medium for his school, he

necessarily places material advancement of the institution above the interests of the students; when he strikes at the more weighty services of the professional newspaper, he neglects both the interests of the school and of the student body; and when he serves as an historical journal, he decreases the liveliness and timeliness of his journal. This matter of the time element, during which the paper appears only at intervals, is one of the chief reasons for the ineffectiveness of college journalism. For anything to be effective, these effects must be felt not only vigorously but often, hence, the acknowledged fact of the greater power and potency of daily newspapers in college as compared to those issued not so often. Argument and opinion which is kept before the public eye daily naturally carries with it more effectiveness than that which makes its pleas and agreements sporadically.

A college newspaper is further limited by its field and by its duties to its constituency, since the journal's first obligation reverts to the students, not the faculty. When an editor does become worldly-minded, he remembers, or should, that the prime duty of any organ is to serve its readers, which, in college, are taken as college students. The things about the campus in which they are interested must form his interests. Their reactions must create his opinions. Their expectations necessarily must dictate something of the paper's policy. But the editor must forever weigh the

worth of student opinion and must stack up beside it his own thoughts, his sense of fairness, and justification for criticism and commendation which arises. Again he faces a tribulation. He must consider just what proportion of student sentiment could be classed as sophomoric radicalism and what percentage of it comes after unbiased, unprejudiced reflection.

It is an observation that college news sheets working independently of anything but their student bodies wield the greatest influences and are most powerfully felt because of such freedom. If an organ which offers the opportunity of students expressing themselves is to be restricted, it can realize no great good. There are few emphatically liberal scholastic newspapers in the United States at the present time, but trends of collegiate journalism and the tendency of youth to assert itself indicate a more promi-

nent future for this type of work and would also depict a substantial increase in the number of such liberal sheets. Aiding this work is the fact that faculties and administrations are showing an increasing desire to determine student sentiment and opinion upon their individual campuses, which is as it should be, for governing heads of institutions can not overlook feelings of their direct patrons.

There is no doubt that college journalism has justified itself, both as a field of training for future men of journalism and as something of value to American colleges. It has its place and its benefits are outstanding enough to merit continuance. The best journalistic effort in the history of colleges is arising from campuses today, and this endeavor is being recognized. We predict for college journalism as an accomplishment a great future.



BOOK REVIEWS

Parisian Uglification

Marietta. By Anne Green. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1932. 277 pp. \$2.50.

I can think of no particular reason why one should not read this book. On the other hand I can think of no particular reason why one should. Such a state of things requires explanation. But will you read a book which is interesting, even hot in the mouth at times, and yet which seems determined that ugliness is gaiety, gaiety ugliness? Perhaps you desire to smirk and feel so ultrasophisticated, so disillusioned, so on the inside of what a licentious life one may lead in Paris? If so, you take the book, and I, like Groucho Marx, will take a butter-scotch sandwich on rye.

Miss Green conceived a plot and characters. Do not shudder at the mid-Victorian word, characters; I do not mean to imply that her barks of frailty carry rudders or any ballast. No; they veer delightfully. *Marietta* falls in love with Lucile's fiancé, Timothy, who undisturbed by inward questionings, marries Lucile. *Marietta* is then sent to Switzerland to ward off incipient tuberculosis. Restored to health, she goes to Italy, takes a lover in a cold, cynical fashion—she has *it*, reader!—returns to Paris, and casually takes a succession of lovers. She has by this time demonstrated that she is the apple of the author's eye, for she plays the game of life perfectly without regarding the rules or having any interest in the score.

Now comes her great chance. Lucile is expecting an heir, and Timothy is bored and somewhat on the loose, an easy victim to *Marietta's* perfected technique. Their affair is terminated by the birth of Lucile's child. Consciousness of paternity swells out

Timothy's manly chest, and he discovers the proprieties. *Marietta*, who has been suffering hallucinations, dies appropriately and by a tour de force of naturalism in a taxicab smash-up. Miss Green achieves the triumph of heightening the life-speed even of a Parisian taxi!

I regret that I cannot say, as one should in such cases, that *Marietta* is extremely well-written. It is not. Errors of expression and punctuation fall upon one at every page. In fact the key sentence of the whole business is on page 11: "Anything will do provided that it breaks the back of a healthy routine and rules laid down by boring elders."

MARIE UPDIKE WHITE.

The Less Mature Cather of Greater Vigor

The Song of the Lark. By Willa Cather. (First impression 1915; New edition 1932). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 490 pp. \$2.50.

The reprint of this seventeen-year old novel brings to point the direction of Willa Cather's maturer art. If her later novels *Death Comes for the Archbishop* and *Shadows on the Rock* must be taken as representative of her more perfect skill, I feel that her complacent mastery has been won at the cost of vitality and spontaneity. *The Song of the Lark* belongs, with *O Pioneers* and *My Antonia*, to that earlier group from which she has steadily taken departure.

The theme is the growth of a woman and the realization of an artist. Instantly it is to be understood that this is no superficial treatment of a talented "home town girl who makes good in the city"; it is rather a profound appreciation of the homely moments

of strength and beauty in the lives of the vapid and mediocre which the soul of the artist seizes upon for spiritual nourishment. Willa Cather was independent, if not daring, in her choice of this theme. The American scene, the writers have said, is no fit soil for the growth of independence of mind. Our main streets produce inevitable mediocrity and standardization; that is what we believe about ourselves. But in Willa Cather there seems to be a persistence of faith.

Something else in this novel, in common with the two above-mentioned, amply warrants H. W. Boynton's designation of it as one of the most "notably indigenous" of all American novels. This is the study of Thea Kronborg's childhood in Moonstone, Colorado. Here, daughter of the town minister, Thea lived among honest dull souls. Egotistical, aloof, assiduous at her piano practice, Thea was pointed out as an unusual child. She played at the church concert—her serious-faced father attempting to conceal his exultation. In her growth, her haughtiness of manner finally brought about a gradual estrangement—the good ladies of the first pew did not approve; inevitable estrangement followed—a severe wrenching from the lethal roots of small town life, but with the retention in memory of the beauty and happy relations that colored her childhood.

Thea Kronborg's story is an important one. There is here something of the development through which the greatest characters in fiction have passed.

OID W. PIERCE, JR.

Julia Peterkin's Day of Glory

Bright Skin. By Julia Peterkin. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. \$2.50.

A success which she achieved a few years ago with the publication of her triumphant "Black April" will in no way be diminished

by Julia Peterkin's latest novel, *Bright Skin*. Here, as in her earlier works, Mrs Peterkin has written of Negro life and has drawn her characters from a typical South Carolina plantation, even impressively merging herself into her picturesque setting and viewing her puppets as they move about in their colorful existence.

Mrs Peterkin's knowledge of the folkways of the South and the region to which she has notably contributed has been of great value to her in the telling of her present story, for she has learned to understand and to feel the warmth of the plantation negro's heart. Her sympathy for him and her refusal to endanger the authenticity of her facts by gross exaggeration together make *Bright Skin* as dramatic and as fascinating as was "Scarlet Sister Mary", her novel that won the Pulitzer prize in 1928. But the present story never assumes the cut-and-dried effect of a folklore collection, despite Mrs Peterkin's accurate intimacy with her subject and her knowledge of Negro superstitions. She has handled her plot well, and the frequency of description, as well as the constant creation of plantation atmosphere, have not noticeably hindered her development. There is possibly one point on which a claim may be based that *Bright Skin* is slightly inferior to either of its two predecessors, "Black April" or "Scarlet Sister Mary",—it has no one dominating character as were April and Mary. The present characters, however, are so skillfully created, developed, and inter-woven, that we do not feel the lack of a central character. It may even be admitted by some that Cricket, the bright-skinned heroine of the novel, and Blue, her lover, are the two most living figures that have yet appeared in Mrs Peterkin's many Negro studies.

The plot is decidedly as interesting as those of her two former novels. It is a triangle, with Cricket, who regretfully is some-

what over-sentimentalized, as one angle, and her two sweethearts, Blue and Man Jay, as the others, with Blue becoming the most fully characterized and human of the three. But Mrs Peterkin has not dominated her plot merely with these leading figures, although she has treated them with slightly more consideration in order to lend an excellent continuity to her narrative. Throughout we see such richly pictured characters as Aun Fan, Aun Missie, Cun Jule, and Uncle Wes, all older relatives of Cricket and Blue, and blended beautifully into the dreamy, almost primitive, background of a Southern landscape. Cricket is the daughter of a Negro woman and a member of the family who once owned the plantation that furnishes the setting of the story. Blue, her cousin, whose mother is branded an adulteress, is brought to his mother's people as a small boy, and immediately falls in love with Cricket. She, however, blinding herself to Blue's nobility of character, accepts the advances of Man Jay, who is a rather shiftless and detestable figure. Man Jay, when he has grown to manhood, flees to Harlem, and Cricket, rather than yield to Blue, falls in love with a yellow bootlegger, who is killed on the day of his intended wedding to her. Blue marries her in order to cause her no disgrace, but she never accepts him as her husband, later going to Harlem herself and creating a sensation there as the Princess Kazoola. Here, it would appear that Mrs Peterkin has departed from her strict confinement to the plantation, but such is not the case, because, although the scene is changed, the influence of the South and the teeming Black Quarters of its negroes remains too vivid and impressive in the reader's mind.

Some may say that Mrs Peterkin has done better work and has somewhat lowered her standard in *Bright Skin*; a few may feel uncomfortable over her treatment of sex and mixture of blood; but the majority of her

readers, which number legion, will, I believe, hail this as her greatest novel. It is a pictorially beautiful book and one that every lover of excellent literature should appreciate.

J. B. CLARK.

The Soviet Builds

Soviet River. By Leonid Leonov. With a preface by Maxim Gorky. New York: Lincoln MacVeagh. 383 pp. \$2.50.

Leonid Leonov's *Soviet River* will be disappointing only to those critics who have maintained that creative writing of a very high standard can not exist under a system of communism. The Soviet government, as depicted by this group, is a mechanized ogre standing over the author's shoulder, directing his pen. Nothing of this sort is apparent in Leonov's work. Although obviously in favor of the system, Leonov is not blind to its failings. He has not written an apotheosis of communism. Along with the successes, the red tape and the inefficiencies of the present governmental machine are noted.

Soviet River is the story of the industrialization of an unproductive section of Northern Russia. It is also a story of the industrialization of the peasants. Into the lives of this superstitious and suspicious group come the Soviet officials with their plans for a giant paper mill to be erected in the locality. To the peasants the officials explain the benefits which they, as workers, will receive from the government. They talk of hospitals, schools, employment, and better living conditions. The peasants are not convinced. Why, they wonder, should the Soviet government want to help them? They look upon their visitors with suspicion and ask innumerable questions. Some are finally convinced and go to work, others follow. In a short time the entire community has thrown aside its rude plows to man steam shovels and dredging machines.

More workers come, and Sotstroy, a modern city, is erected on the banks of the Sot. It is a tremendously fascinating and realistic picture that Leonov paints; the characters are human, their reactions are plausible! For a time one forgets Marx and the Romanovs, the machinations of the Communists and the power of Stalin, to watch that interesting individual, the Russian peasant, struggling to accustom himself to a hitherto undreamed of environment.

In the preface Gorky says: "If we may say of Tolstoy that he 'forged his books out of iron'—and of Turgenev that he cast his out of copper and silver—then Leonov must be regarded as operating with a very complex alloy of metals." Leonov is a masterful stylist; his descriptions are brilliant and incisive. He has thrown himself into the clamor and bustle of the new Russia and has produced what will be looked upon in the future, if not as a masterpiece, certainly as one of the really excellent novels in Russian literature. His only noticeable failing, it seems to me, lies in the arrangement of his material. Often he recounts an action of one of the characters, leaving the reader utterly mystified as to the reason for that action. Later he retraces his steps to explain. Leonov is young, and his writing has been necessarily limited. With maturity and further experience, one feels confident that the U. S. S. R. will be able to point to at least one Russian novelist equal to the masters of the nineteenth century.

LOUIS J. CLARK.

Momentary Relief

The Yoke of Thunder. By Robert P. Tristram Coffin. New York: The Macmillan Company. 89 pp. \$2.00.

Here is a little book of poems bringing

with it a certain bit of refreshment after the recent deluge of satire, fantasy, and cynicism from the pens of Dorothy Parker, Samuel Hoffenstein, and Don Marquis. Mr Coffin has no idea of being satirical, cynical, or fantastic, and as exemplified in *The Yoke of Thunder* his inspiration comes from experience perhaps a bit mellowed with age. If he becomes optimistic to a degree that belies his emphatic sincerity, it is perhaps due to the realization that a cloud's silver lining is by far its most beautiful part.

The included poems range in subject matter from nature studies and religion to character sketches and analyses. In the nature studies Mr Coffin resorts to almost anything in order to preserve the music of the lines, the rhythm never being sacrificed to the thought, but his simple philosophy does not require wordy decoration to make itself evident.

His "Rura Cano" and "A Lonely, Swimming Bird" are reminiscent of Edna St. Vincent Millay's "Renascence", but they lack a certain bigness that could have been achieved. This is a general characteristic of *The Yoke of Thunder*. It may be that the poet wishes to leave to the reader the joy of completing the thought in his own mind, but some of his work seems too soon incomplete.

Of course, some of the poems would be better unpublished, and too frequently are padded lines inserted that interrupt the theme, but no bookshelf would be criticized for holding *The Yoke of Thunder*.

MARSHALL PRITCHETT.

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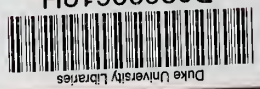
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